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A

TREATISE

OF

Self-Denyall.

By *Richard Baxter*, Paſtor of the Church at *Kederminſter*.

PHIL. 2. 20, 21.

I have no man like minded who will naturally care for your ſtate.

For all ſeek their own; not the things which are Jeſus Chriſts.

LONDON,
Printed by *Robert White*, for *Nevil Simmons* Bookſeller in *Kederminſter*, and are to be ſold by him there, and by *William Gilbertſon* at the Bible in Gilt-ſpurſtreet without Newgate, and by *Joſeph Nevil* at the Plow in *Pauls* Church-yard, 1660. At 3ˢ - 3ᵈ bound.

To the Honourable Colonel James Berry, *one of the Council of State*, &c.

SIR,

PRovidence having deprived me of the opportunity of nearer converse with you, which heretofore I have enjoyed, yet leaving me the same affections, they work towards you as they can; and have chosen here to speak to you in the hearing of the world, that my words may remain to the ends intended, when a private Letter may be burnt or cast aside. Flattery I am confident you expect not from me, because you know me, and know me to be your friend. (And yet my late Monitor hath made many smile, by accusing me of that fawning crime.) I am told what it is to *bless my friend with a loud voice*, *Prov.* 27. 14. I have learnt my self, that [*Open rebuke*

is better then secret love; and that faithful are the wounds of a friend, but the kisses of an enemy are deceitful] *Prov.* 27. 5, 6. And therefore I shall do as I would be done by. *Faithfulness* and *Usefulness* shall be the measure of my message to you. And they have commanded me to set before you this lesson of *Self-denyal*, and earnestly to intreate you, and again itnreate you, that you will faithfully *Read*, and *Learn*, and *Practice* it. Though I judged you to have learnt it long ago, I think it not needless to mind you of it again; my soul being astonished to see the power of *Selfishness* in the world, even in those that by Confessions and Prayers, and high Professions, have frequently condemned it. Yet this is the Radical-mortal sin. Where this lives, all sin virtually lives. Say that a man is *Selfish*, and (in that measure) you say all that is naught of him, as to his inclination. That *Selfishness* is the summe of Vice, and the Capital enemy of God, of Commonwealths, of Order and Government, of all Grace and Vertue, of every holy Ordinance and Duty, especially of Unity and Brotherly Love, and of the welfare of our neighbours, and of our own salvation, I have manifested to you in the following Discourse. But alas, what need we words to manifest it, when the flames of discord and long-continued divisions among Brethren do manifest it! When hatred, strife, variance, emulation, backbiting, violence, rebellions, bloodshed, resisting and pulling down of Governments, have so lamentably declared it! When such havock is made by it before our eyes, and the evil spirit goes on and prospereth, and desolation is zealously and studiously carried on, and the voice of Peace-makers is despised or drowned in the confused noise! [*Presumptuous are*

they,

they, self-willed, they have not been afraid to speak evil of dignities, 2 Pet. 2. 10.] *To speak evil?* was that the height of presumption and self-willedness then? Alas, how much further hath it proceeded now? even under the Cloak of *Liberty* and *Religion?* How many Conquerours that have often triumphed over their enemies, are conquered by *themselves*, and live in continual captivity, under this home-bred most imperious Tyrant?

Whence is it but for want of *self-denyal*, that there is such scrambling for Rule and Greatness, for Riches and Honours among all? As if they thought it more desirable to fall from an high place then a low! and at death to part with Riches then with Poverty! and at Judgement to have much to answer for, then little? and to go to heaven as a Camel through a needles eye, then by the more plain and easie way.

Whence is it but for want of *self-denyal*, that men are so hardly convinced of their sins, be they never so open, and odious, and scandalous, if they be but such as will admit of an excuse before the world? Most sins that are confest, are such as seem not to be disgraceful, or such whose justification would double the disgrace, or such as are confest in pride, that the confessor may gain the reputation of humility.

Whence is it but for want of *self-denyal*, that Christian Love is grown so cold, while all profess it to be the badge of Christs disciples? And that so many professors have so little Charity for any but those of their own opinions: unless it be a slandering Charity, or a persecuting, or murdering Charity? That all is commendable or excusable, that is done by men of their own conceits; and all condemnable, or a diminu-

tive good, that is found in those that differ from them; especially if they dispute or write against them?

Whence is it but for want of *self-denyal*, that men who know that whoredom, and drunkenness, and theft are sins, can yet be ignorant (in the midst of light) that discord and Church-divisions are sins? And that they hear him with heart-rising, enmity, or suspition, that doth declaim against them? As if Uniting were become the work of Satan, and Dividing were become the work of Christ. I mean not *Dividing* from those without, but *Dividing* in his Church, and among his members; who are all baptized with one Spirit into one body, 1 *Cor.* 12.13. even the Body of Christ, (not of the Pope) of which even Apostles are but members (and therefore *Peter* was not the Head) 1 *Cor.* 12.27,28. which is so tempered together by God, that there should be no schism in it, but that the members should have the same care one of another, 1 *Cor.* 12.24,25. And that for all the plain and terrible passages against Divisions, that are found in the word of God, it seems to some a Venial sin, and to others a commendable Vertue, if not a mark of Christian Piety. I may seem to speak incredible things, of the delusions of *selfish* Professors of Religion, if they were not attested by the common and lamentable experience of the times.

And whence is it but for want of *self-denyal*, that Peace-makers succeed no better in their attempts? That while all men cry up Peace and Unity, most men are destroying them, and few are furthering them, and fewer do it with zeal and diligence; so few, that they are born down in the crowd, and speed no better then *Lot* among the rabble of the *Sodomites*, that cryed out against

against him [*This one fellow came in to sojourn, and he will needs be a judge: Now will we deal worse with thee then with them*] *Gen.* 19. 9. How long have some been longing, and praying, and moving, and labouring for Peace among the professed sons of Piety and Peace, in *England?* and all (for ought I see) almost in vain: unless to the condemnation of a selfish unpeaceable generation. (But yet let the sons of Peace plead for it, as long as they have a tongue and breath to speak.)

Whence can it be but for want of *self-denyal*, that Magistrates professing a zeal for Holiness, regard no more the interest of Christ? but that the Name (and but the name) of Liberty, (a Liberty that hath neither Moral good or evil in it) is set in the ballance against the things of everlasting consequence, and thought sufficient to over-weigh them? And that the meer pretence of this indifferent-carnal Liberty, is thought an argument of sufficient weight, for the introduction of a wicked damning Liberty, even a Liberty to deceive and destroy as many as they can, and to hinder those that endeavour mens salvation? And whats the argument pleaded for all this? Its partly a pretence of *tenderness and mercy*: and partly because *men cannot be made Religious by force.* And must such ignorant or jugling confusions serve turn, to cheat a Nation of their Religion and Liberties, and many thousands of their salvation? As if all the controversie were, whether we should force others to be of our Religion? when it is only or principally, Whether we may hinder them from robbing us of our own? and from tempting unstable souls to sin and to damnation? and from hindring the means of mens salvation? and

from

from the open practise of Idolatry or ungodliness? If we cannot force them to the Christian faith, cannot we hinder them from drawing others from it? And are we unmerciful to them, if we give them leave to damn themselves (for thats the mercy that is pleaded for) and only hinder them from damning others? Is it cruelty or persecution to hinder them from ticing souls to Hell, as long as they may freely go thither themselves? I should rather think, that if we did our best to save themselves, it were far from cruelty. For example, if Infidel or Papists Books be prohibited, what cruelty or persecution is this? If Quakers be hindred from railing at Gods Ordinances in the open streets and Assemblies, what cruelty or persecution is this? But some think it enough for this Toleration, that *they* think as confidently they are in the right, as we do that they err! And so do Heathens, Mahometans, and Infidels. And what! Shall every man have leave to do evil, that can but be ignorant enough to think, (or say he thinks) that he doth well? And must Magistrates rule as men that are uncertain whether there be a Christ, or a Church, or a Heaven, or Hell, because some are found in their dominions so foolish or impious as to be uncertain of it? In plain English, is it any hinderance to mens salvation, and furtherance of their damnation, to be made Infidels, Papists, and such as deny the Essentials of Christianity, or not? If not; then away with Christianity and Reformation. Why do we pretend to it our selves? But if it be; will merciful Rulers set up a trade for butchering of souls? and allow men to set up a shop of poyson, for all to buy and take that will? yea to proclaim this poyson for souls, in streets and Church-assemblies,

assemblies, as if mens souls were no more worth then Rats or Mice, or hurtful vermine, it were some noble atchievement to send as many as may be to the Devil. Judge impartially, Whether all this be not for want of *self-denyal?* If selfish intereſt led them not to this, and if they were more tender of the Intereſt of Christ then of their own, and of mens souls then of their flesh, it would not be thus. But the same argument that tempts the sensual to Hell, doth tempt such Magistrates to set up Liberty for drawing men to Hell. The wicked sell their souls to spare their flesh, and let go Heaven to enjoy the Liberty of sinning, and run into Hell to scape the trouble of an holy life: And such Magistrates sell the peoples souls to spare the flesh of the deceivers; and in tenderneſs and mercy to their bodies, they dare not restrain men from seeking their damnation. Is faith and holineſs propagated by perswasion, and not by force? Surely then Infidelity, Popery and Ungodlineſs, are propagated by perswasion too! Again I tell you, *self-love* doth make such Rulers wiser then to grant Commission or Liberty to all that will, to tice their souldiers to mutinies or rebellion, their wives to adultery, their children to prodigality, or their servants to thievery: But the love of Christ and mens salvation is not so strong as to satisfie them whether men should be hindred from raising mutinies in his Church, and from destroying souls! Forsooth, they tell us that Christ is sufficient to look to his own cause. Very true (and they shall one day know it.) But must he not therefore teach or rule by men? Is not Adultery, Murder, Theft, Rebellion, against the Cause of Christ, and his laws, as well as Popery and Infidelity? And must they therefore be let alone

by man? Christ is sufficient to Teach the world, as well as to Govern. But doth it follow that men must be no Teachers, under him? nothing but *selfishnesse* could cause this blindness.

And because I know, that this stream proceeds from the *Roman* spring, and it is their great design to perswade the world, that it belongs not to Magistrates to meddle with Religion, but only to cherish them that the Pope approveth of, and to punish those whom the Pope condemns, and that Christ must Govern and judge of matters of Religion himself, that is, by his pretended *Roman*-Vicechrist, I shall only now say this: that if *Rome* were acquainted with *self-denyal*, and if the *selfish* carnal interest of Riches and Rule and worldly greatness, had not blinded them, they could never have beleeved themselves, that Christ did appoint the Pope of *Rome* to be his Universal Vicar; and that Princes and Magistrates in their own Dominions, have not more Power to judge who is to be tolerated or punished by the sword, then the Pope of *Rome*: when no Priest or Prelate upon earth (as such) hath any thing to do with such a judgement, no not in the places where they live. All that they have to do herein, is to judge who is the Heretick or offendor in order to his censure and excommunication: But its Magistrates only that must judge who is the Heretick or offendor in order to corporal punishment or restraint. And this I undertake to make good against all the Papists in the world: much more that the *Roman* tyrant, hath no such Power at the Antipodes, and in all the Christian nations on earth.

Remember in all this, that I speak not against a Toleration of Godly tolerable men, Episcopal, Presbyterian,

rian, Independent, Anabaptist, *&c.* that will walk in Charity, Peace and Concord; we shall never be well till these are closed. But do we not know that Papists have *Italy* and *Spaine* and *Germany* and *France* at hand to help them? And that if we grant them such a liberty as shall strengthen them and make way for their power, we give away our own liberty, and are preparing faggots for our martyrdom, and giving away the Gospel that by wonders of mercy hath been till now preserved, (and I hope shall be preserved in despite of *Rome* and Hell.) Nor yet do I plead for any cruelty against a Papist, but for a necessary *Defence* of the interest of Christ and the souls of men, and the hopes of our posterity.

Did Magistrates well know their dependence upon God, and that they are his officers, and must make him their end, they would not take their flocks to be their masters, though they may take them for their charge; nor would they set up a carnal interest of the multitude, against the pleasing of God, and mens salvation: nor would they think so highly of mens conceits and wills, as to judge it a matter of so much moment, to allow them in Religion to say or do what they list. If *allowing a mans self* in the practice of *Known sin*, is inconsistent with a state of grace, and a sign of a miserable slave of Satan: I leave it to you to consider, what it will prove to *allow others* even countries and nations in *Known sin*. And if Rulers know not that setting up an Universal Vicechrist, and worshipping bread with Divine worship, and serving God in an unknown tongue, with other points of Popery, are sin; and that opposing and reproaching the holy Scriptures, Ordinances, and Ministry, are sin, wo to such Rulers, and

wo to the nations that are Ruled by such. O what a blessing is a *holy self-denying* Magistracy to a Nation! If one would have told me twenty years ago, that you and such as you should be Rulers in this land, what apprehensions should I have had of glorious times? how confidently and joyfully should I have promised my self an universal encouragement to godliness, and a vigorous promoting of the cause of Christ, and a zealous suppressing of all that is against it! Little should I have thought that after Professors of godliness were in power, so many years should have been spent in destroying Charity and Unity, and cherishing almost all that will stand up for the Devil, and plead his cause against the Doctrine and Discipline and Worship and Churches and Officers of Jesus Christ. And that in their dayes it should have been put to the Question, whether the Ministry it self should be taken down. And that *men in power should write* for Liberty, for all that will call it self Religion, even Popery not excepted (nor I think, Infidelity or Mahumetisme it self) and that those that *write so* should be *men in Power*. My heart would have risen against him as an odious calumniator, that should have presumed to tell me, that such men as have attempted this, would ever have come to such a pass: and I should have encountered them with *Hazaels* question, Are they dogs, that they should do so vile a thing? and exercise such cruelty on souls, and seek to bring back the people of God to the Romish vomit, and set up the greatest tyranny on earth, and all under pretence of a Religious Liberty.

But alas, it is not Magistrates only that are so wanting in *self-denyal*. Ministers also are guilty of this crime: Or else we should not have been so forward to

divisions,

divisions, and so backward to the cure; nor would men of this profession, for the interest of their opinions and parties, have cherished dissension, and fled from concord, and have had a hand in the resisting and pulling down authority, and embroiling the nations in wars and miseries. And whence is it but for want of *self-denyal*, (for our own faults must be confessed) that the Ministers of Christ, are so much silent in the midst of such heynous miscarriages as the times abound with? I know we receive not our Commission as Prophets did, by immediate extraordinary inspiration! But what of that? The Priests that were called by an ordinary way, were bound to be plain and faithful in their office, as well as the Prophets: And so are we. How plainly spoke the Prophets even to Kings? and how patiently did they bear indignities and persecutions? But now we are grown carnally wise and cautelous; (for holy wisdom and caution I allow) and if duty be like to cost us dear, we can think that we are excused from it: If great men would set up Popery in the land by a Toleration, after so much blood and war against it, and so much fasting and prayer for reformation, and so many solemn engagements and professions; alas, how many Ministers think they may be silent, for fear left the contrivers should call them seditious, or turbulent or disobedient, or should set a *Rogers*, or a *Stubbe*, or a *Pierce*, to raile at them and call them *Lyers* and *Calumniators*: or for fear left they should be persecuted, and ruined in their estates or names! If they do but foresee, that men in power or honour in the world, will charge them with *Lyes* or *unchristian dealing*, for speaking the words of *Truth* and *Soberness*, against the Introduction of Popery and im-

piety, and that they shall be made as the scorn and off-scouring of the world, and have all manner of evil saying falsly spoken of them, for the sake of Christ, his Church and truth, they presently consult with flesh and blood, and think themselves discharged of their duty: when God saith, *Ezek. 33. 6.* &c. [*If the watchman see the sword come, and blow not the trumpet, and the people be not warned; if the sword come and take any person from among them, he is taken away in his iniquity, but his blood will I require at the watchmans hand.*] And were we no watchmen, yet we have this command, *Lev. 19. 17.* [*Thou shalt not hate thy brother in thy heart: thou shalt in any wise rebuke thy neighbour, and not suffer sin upon him.*] Yet now many Ministers will be cruelly silent, lest they should be charged with malice and hating those whom they are commanded to rebuke. The sword of violence I perswade them not to meddle with: but were it not for want of *self-denyal*, the sword of the spirit would be more faithfully managed against the sins of the greatest enemies of Christ and of the Gospel, then it is by most, though it should cost us more then scorns and slanders, and though we know that bonds and afflictions did abide us.

And verily I cannot yet understand, that the contempt and scorn of the Ministry in *England*, is fed by any thing so much as *selfishnesse*. Could we be for all mens *Opinions* and Carnal interests, all men, for ought I see, would be for us: Is it a crime to be a Minister? Doubtless its then a crime to be a Christian: And he that rails at us as Ministers to day, its like will raile at us as Christians to morrow. But if such will vouchsafe to come to me, before they venture their souls, and soberly debate the case, I undertake to prove the truth

truth of Christianity. The world may see in *Clem. Writers* exceptions against my Treatise of *Infidelity*, what thin transparent Sophisms, and silly Cavils, they use against the Christian cause. When they have well answered, not only that Treatise, but *Du Plessis*, *Grotius*, *Vives*, *Ficinus*, *Micrælius*, and the antient Apologies of the Christian Writers of the Church, let them boast then that they have confuted Christianity. The Devil hath told me long ago in his secret temptations, as much against the Christian Faith, as ever I yet read in any of our Apostates: But God hath told me of much more thats for it, and enabled me to see the folly of their Reasonings, that think the mysteries of the Gospel to be foolishness.

But if it be not as Ministers and Christians that we are hated; what is it then? If because we are ignorant, insufficient, negligent or scandalous, why do they not by a legal tryal cast us out, and put those in our places that are more able, diligent and godly, when we have provok't them to it, and beg'd it of them so often as we have done? If it be because we are not *Papists*, it is because we cannot renounce all our *senses*, our *Reason*, the *Scripture*, the *Unity*, *Judgement* and *Tradition* of the far greatest part of the Universal Church? If I have not already proved that Popety fighteth against all these, and am not able to make it good against any Jesuite on earth, let them go on to number me with Hereticks, and let them use me as they do such when I am in their power. If we are hated because we are not of the *Opinions* of those that hate us, it seems those *Opinions* are enemies to Charity; and then we have little reason to embrace them. And if this be it, we are under an unavoidable necessity of being

ing hated : For among such diversity of *Opinions*, it is impossible for us to comply with all, if we *durst* be false to the known truth, and *durst* become the servants of men, and make every self-conceited Brother the Master of our Faith. If we are so reviled, because we are against an Universal Liberty of speaking or writing against the truths and waies of Christ, and of labouring in Satans harvest, to the divid ng of the Churches and the damnation of souls, it is then in the upshot, because we are not of any Religion, and are not despisers of the Gospel, and of the Church, and of mens salvation; and because we believe in Jesus Christ. I have lately found by their exclamations, and common defamations, and threatnings, and by the Volumes of reproaches that come forth against me, and by the swarms of lyes that have been sent forth against me through the Land, that even the present *Contrivers* of *Englands* Misery (*Liberty*, I would say) and of Toleration for Popery, and more, are themselves unable to bear contradiction from one such an inconsiderable person as my self; and they have got it into the mouthes of souldiers, that my writings are the cause of wars, and that till I give over writing, they shall not give over fighting (though I do all that I am able to do for Peace). And if this be so, what a case would they bring the Nation into, by giving far greater Liberty to all, then ever I made use of! Unless they still except a Liberty of contradicting themselves, they must look for other kind of usage, when Libertinism is set up. Yea if they will seek the ruine of the Church and Cause of Christ, they must look that we should *take* Liberty to contradict them, and to speak for Christ and the souls of men, till they have deprived us of tongues, or pens,

or

or lives; And they must expect that we obey God rather then men, and that, as *Paul* did *Peter*, *Gal.* 2. 11. we *withstand them to the face*; and that Satan shall not be unresisted, because *he is transformed into an Angel of Light*; nor *his Ministers* be unresisted, because they are *transformed into the Ministers of Righteousness*; nor the *false Apostles and deceitful workers*, because they are *transformed into the Apostles of Christ*] 2 *Cor.* 11. 13, 14, 15. Nor must they think to do so horrid a thing, as to weave their *Libertinism, and Toleration of Popery into a new Fundamental Constitution of the Common-wealth, which Parliaments must have no power to alter*, and that the ages to come shall curse us for our silence, and say that Ministers, and other Christians were all so basely *selfish*, as for fear of reproaches or sufferings, to say nothing, but cowardly to betray the Gospel and their Countrey. If the rattling of the hail of persecution on the tiles, even on this flesh, which is but the tabernacle of our souls, be a terrible thing; how much more terrible is the indignation of the Lord, and the threats of him that is a consuming fire! If you can venture your life against an enemy in the field, we are bastards and not Christians if we cannot venture ours, and give them up to persecuting rage, as long as we know that we have a Master that will save us harmless, and that the God whom we serve is able to deliver us, and that he hath charged us not to fear them that kill the body, and after that can do no more, *&c.* and that he hath told us that we are blessed when men revile us and persecute us, and say all manner of evil against us falsly for his sake; bidding us, *Rejoyce and be exceeding glad, for great is our reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the Prophets that were before us*, *Mat.* 5. 10, 11, 12. and

when we are told that he that will save his life shall lose it; and whosoever will lose his life, for the sake of Christ, shall find it, *Mat.* 16. 25. and when we know that we own a cause that shall prevail at last, and resist them *whose end shall be according to their works*, 2 *Cor.* 11. 15. And what though this be unknown to the opposers? That will not warrant *us* to betray a cause that *we know* to be of God; nor will the ignorance of others excuse us for neglecting known truth and duty. If the souls of private persons be worth all the study and labour of our lives, and we must deal faithfully with them, whatever it shall cost us; surely the safety of a Nation, and the hopes of our posterity, and the publike interest of Christ, is worthy to be spoken for with much more zeal, and we may suffer more joyfully, for contradicting a publike destroyer of the Church, then for telling a poor drunkard or whoremonger of his sin and misery.

Hitherto I have permitted my pen to express my sense of the common want of *self-denyal* in the Land: Now give me leave, as your most affectionate faithful friend, to turn my stile a little to your self, and earnestly to entreate of you these following particulars.

1. In general, that as long as you live you will watch against this common deadly sin of *Selfishness*, and study continually the duty of *Self-deynal*. We shall be empty of Christ, till we are *Nothing* in our *selves*. Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven. *Self* is the strongest and most dangerous enemy that ever you fought against. It is a whole Army united; and the more dangerous because so near. Many that have fought as valiantly and successfully against other enemies as you, have at last been conquered

ed and undone by *Self*. And conquer it you cannot without a conflict: And the conflict must endure as long as you live: And *combating* is not *pleasing* to the *enemy*: And therefore as long as *self* is the enemy, and *self-pleasing* so natural to corrupted man, (that should be wholly addicted to *Please* the Lord) *Self-denyal* will prove a difficult task: And if somewhat in the advice that would engage you deeper in the conflict, should seem bitter or ungrateful, I should not wonder. And let me freely tell you, that your prosperity and advancement will make the work so exceeding difficult, that since you have been a Major General, and a Lord, and now a Councellor of State, you have stood in a more slippery perilous place, and have need of much more grace and vigilancy, then when you were but *Baxter's Friend*. Great places and employments have great temptations, and are great avocations of the mind from God. And no errour scarcely can be small, that is committed in publike great affairs; which the honor of God, and the temporal and spiritual welfare of so many, do, in some sort depend upon. These times have told us to our grief, what victory and prosperity can do, to strengthen the *selfish* principle in men: They have swallowed Camels since they were lifted up, that would have strained at Gnats in a lower state. The Ministery, and Ordinances, and holy Communion that once were sweet to them, are grown into contempt. *Centaury* and *Wormwood* are excellent helps to procure an appetite, and strengthen the stomack; but marrow and sweetness breed a loathing. The Vertiginous disease is not so strong with them that are on the ground, as with them that stand on the top of a steeple. I had rather twenty times look up at them that are so exalted,

then stand with them, and have the terror of looking down. Had not professors been intoxicated by prosperity, they had not believed and lived so giddily. I have often seen mens reason marr'd with a cup or two too much, but seldom by too little. And too many I have known, that have wounded conscience and sold their souls for the love of prosperity and wealth; but none that ever did it for poverty. For a rich man to be saved is *impossible to man*, though all *things are possible with God*, Matth. 19. 26; Luk 18. 27. For my own part, I bless God that hath kept me from greatness in the world, and I take it as the principal act of *friendship* that ever you did for me, that you provoked me to this sweet, though flesh-displeasing life, of the Ministry, in which I have *chosen* to abide. I had rather lye in health on the hardest bed, then be sick upon the softest. And I see that a fether-bed maketh not a sick man well. The sleep of the labouring man is sweet: The plow-mans brown bread and cheese, is more savoury to him, and breedeth fewer sicknesses, then the fulness and variety of the rich. This country dyet doth not cherish voluptuousness, arrogancy, vain-glory, earthly mindedness, uncharitableness, and other *selfish* diseases, so much as worldly greatness doth.

Experience tells us that most men are best in a low estate: insomuch that a bad man in sickness will speak better, and seem more penitent and mortified, then many better men in health. Its a wonderful hard thing to live like a Christian in full prosperity; and to be above this world, and have lively apprehensions of the invisible things, and live a heavenly conversation, in health and wealth, when our flesh hath so much provision at hand, to accommodate and please it. Prosperity doth

doth powerfully corrupt the mind: It breedeth many dangerous errors, and vices; and it maketh uſeleſs that knowledge which men have: ſo that though ſuch men can ſpeak the ſame words as another, about the matters of the life to come, it is but dreamingly, and without life. Their Knowledge hath but little power on their hearts and lives. The *world* is ſo *Great* with them, which is as *nothing*, that *God* and *everlaſting life* are as *nothing* to them, which are *All*. They are ſo *full* of the creature that they have no room for *Chriſt*: and ſo buſie about *earth*, that they have but little time for *heaven*: and taſte ſo much ſweetneſs in their preſent pomp, that they cannot reliſh the true and durable delights. They know their *Morals*, as they know ſome Aſtronomical, or Geometrical verities, by an opinion or uneffectual Knowledge: ſo that indeed they *Know not* what they Know. *Pauſanias* in his proſperity deſiring to hear ſome ſecrets of Philoſophy, had no more from *Simonides* but, *Remember that thou art a man*: He contemned this at the preſent, as a ridiculous *Memento* of that which no man could forget: But when he was reduced to an extremity, he then remembred the Philoſophers leſſon, and perceived there was more in it, then he underſtood when he contemned it.

How little is there in a proſperous ſtate, that ſhould ſeem deſirable in a wiſe mans eyes? why is it that great travellors and ſtateſmen, and all that have moſt tryed the world, deſire to withdraw from it, toward the evening of their age, and to retire themſelves into a private life, that they may there look towards eternal things, and cry out of the *Vanity* and *Vexation* which they have here found? Muſt we not conceive them wiſer after much *experience*, then before? and there-

fore wiser in their *recesse*, then in their *aspirings?* and therefore that its folly to be ambitious, and wisdom to contemn the world? why else do dying men most contemn it? *Dear friend*, you'l think of these things more understandingly and more feelingly one of these dayes, when you come to dye, then you can do now. I would not for all the world have been without the advantages of looking death so often in the face, as I have done since you first knew me. If I have been but a while without this sight, and have but conceited that yet I have many years to live, alas, how it hath enervated my Knowledge and my Meditations! So that twenty times thinking the same holy thoughts, will not do so much as once will do, when I seem to be nearer my everlasting state.

And what doth worldly greatness add to your real worth in the eyes of God or of wise men? Magistracy as a thing Divine I honour: But *James* hath taught me, not to be partial to the rich as rich, and call up the man with the gold ring and gay attire, and say to the poor, Sit there at my footstool. As to be proud of fine cloaths is a childish or womanish piece of folly, below a man: so to be proud of victories, and dignities, and wealth, and worldly honours, is the vanity of an Infidel or Atheist, and below a Christian that hath the hopes of heaven. If a man be holy, he is above his worldly greatness, and beareth it as his burden, and feareth it as his snare. And if he be *Carnal*, he is the faster in his misery; and golden fetters are stronger then any others. A pebble-stone on the top of *Atlas* is but a pebble: and a pearl is a pearl in the bottom of the sea. A nettle on the top of a mountain is but a nettle: and a *Cedar* in the lowest valley is a *Cedar*. If God dwell with

with the contrite, and have respect to him that is poor and humble, and trembleth at his word, it seems they are most to be respected, and are the most honourable, if God can put more honour upon us by his approbation then man. God will not ask us, *where we have grown* (in order to our Justification) but *what fruit we have born?* nor whether we were Rich or poor? but *whether* we were *Holy* or *unholy?* nor *what was our station?* but *How we behaved our selves in it?*

Prosperity usually breedeth a *tenderness* and *sickly* frame of soul, so that we can scarce look out of door, but our affections take cold; and can scarce feed on the most wholesome food, but we receive it with some loathing, or turn it to the matter of some disease. But to worldly vanities, it breeds a Canine appetite: so that ambitious wretches are like dogs, that greedily swallow the morsel that you cast them, and presently gape for more. But wholesome poverty, hardeneth us against such tenderness and infirmities, and breedeth not such diseases in the soul [*A Poor mans rod when thou dost ride, Is both a weapon and a guide*] saith our *serious Poet*. I sleep most sweetly when I have travelled in the cold; frost and snow are friends to the *seed*, though they are enemies to the *flower*. Adversity indeed is contrary to *Glory*, but it befriendeth *Grace*. *Plutarch* tells us, that when *Cesar* past by a smoky nasty village, at the foot of the *Alpes*, some of his Commanders merrily askt him, [*whether there was such a stir for Commands and dignities and honours among those cottages, as there was at Rome?*] The answer's easie. Do you think that an *Antony*, a *Mark*, a *Hierom*, or such other of the antient retired Christians, were not wiser and happier men, then a *Nero* or a *Caligula*; yea or a

or a *Julius*, or *Augustus Cesar*? Is it a desirable thing to be a Lord or Ruler, before we turn to common earth? and as *Marius* that was one day made Emperour, and reigned the next, and was slain by a souldier the next; so to be worshipped to day, and laid in the dust, if not in hell, to morrow? It was the saying of the Emperour *Severus*, *Omnia fui, sed nihil expedit*: And of King *David*, *I have seen an end of all perfection.* O value these things but as they deserve! Speak impartially; Are not those that are striving to get up the ladder, fooliſh and ridiculous, when those that are at the top, have attained but danger, trouble and envy; and those that fall down are accounted miserable?

Juven. ——— *Sed nulla aconita bibuntur*
Fictilibus ———

There are more draughts of poyson given in *Golden*, then in *earthen Vessels*, saith the Poet. The Scythian therefore was no fool, that when the Emperour *Mich. Paleologus* sent him precious Ornaments and Jewels, askt, *What they were good for? Whether they would preserve him from calamity, sickness or death?* and sent them home, when he heard they were of no more use. You desire not the *biggest shoos*, or *cloathes*, but the *meetest*; So do by your dignity and estate: As you must *ask* but your *Daily bread*, so must you *desire* no more: Neither poverty, nor riches, but convenient food: yet so as to learn to abound and to want, and in every state to be content: *bearing* Riches and Dignity if *cast upon you*, without seeking; but not *desiring* or *gaping* after them, nor *glorying* in them: Undergoing them as a burden with patience and self-denyal, and carefully using

using all for God; but neither desiring nor using them for *Carnal self.* [*They that will be rich* (or great) *fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition: for the love of money is the root of all evil, which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows*] 1 Tim 6.9, 10.

Remember where you begun, and where you must end. *Naked you came into the world, and naked you must return to dust.* You brought no riches hither, and none shall you take hence, unless you learn the blessed art of making friends of the unrighteous Mammon, and laying up a good foundation against the time to come, and laying up a treasure in heaven, by the right improvement of your present mercies. Though our life be not circular, but progressive, the end as to our naturals, is liker to the beginning then to the middle. If we dye not children, yet liker to children then we live. Its sad that the height and perfection of our age should be the height of our folly: And that childhood and retired age should be least entangled with these vanities. And its a lamentable stupidity that alloweth *self* so confidently to play its game, so near eternity, where one would think the noise of damned souls, and the triumphant joyes of blessed Saints, that past to rest by the way of *self-denyal*, should mar the sport, and turn their pride into shame and trembling; and the great things of mortality that are even at hand, should drown the noise of pomp and pleasure, and make the Greatness of this world appear an inconsiderable thing. The Lord grant that you be no less humble, and heavenly, and true to Christ, and above this world,

then when you and I had our first familiar converse, (and sure by this time you should be much better.) Its said of *Agathocles* King of *Sicilie*, that having been a Potters son, he would alwayes have together, earthen and golden vessels at his table, to remember him of his Original. You tread on earth, and bear about you such evidences of your frailty, as serve to tell you, whence your flesh is, and whither its going, and how it should be used now: Remember also your spiritual new birth, by what seed you were begotten, and by what milk you were nourished, and see that you degenerate not, and do nothing unworthy that noble birth, and the heavenly nature then received.

II. And remember that *self-denyal* is never right, unless it be caused by the love of God; and as you *deny your self*, so you entirely and unreservedly devote *your self* to him. To this end I crave your observation of these few unquestionable precepts.

1. Take heed of Unbelief, and dread all temptations tending to it, and live by that faith which maketh absent things to be to you as present, and things unseen as if they were seen. When Heaven once loseth its interest in the soul, the world may play *Rex* and delude and destroy us at its pleasure.

2. Take heed of all intrusions of *selfishness*: Especially overvalue not your own understanding in the things of God. Draw not a great picture of a little man. Be not easily drawn to contemn the judgments of those that have searched the holy Scriptures, with equal diligence and humility, and with much more advantages of retiredness, and time and helps then you.

3. Take heed of engaging your hand, or tongue, or secret thoughts, against the faithful Ministers of Christ:

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But further the work of Christ in their hands, with all your power. I am no Prophet, but yet presume to say, *that if the reproaches of a faithful Minister in England, be purg'd away without some dreadful judgment of God on the Apostate reproachers, or else a desertion of the nation, by a removing of our glory, I shall wonder at the patience and forbearance of the Lord.* Its a dreadful observation, to see so much of the spirit of *Malignity* possessing those that once said, they fought against *Malignants.* And that the Ministers and servants of the Lord, are railed at by many of them, as formerly they were by the worst of those that their hands destroyed: And with this dreadful aggravation, that then it was but some that were reviled, and now with many it is *all:* then it was under the name of Puritans and Round-heads; and now it is openly as *Ministers,* under the name of *Priests,* and *Blackcoats,* and *Presbyters,* and *Pulpeteers.* What have these souls done, that they are so far forsaken by the Lord! The judge of all the world is at the door, that will plead his servants cause in righteousness. It is hard kicking against the pricks. He that despiseth, despiseth not men, but God. Persecution under pretence of Liberty, is heightened with hypocrisie, and is one of the greatest sins in the world. But men are not catcht in spiders webs, though flyes are: our Lord will make us a way to escape. Persecution never conquered Christ: And because he lives we shall live also. Here is the faith and patience of the Saints.

I know that malice wants not words to cloak their iniquity. He that hath will and power to do hurt, hath so much wit as to pretend some reason for it: Though I think that malice did never walk more nakedly, since

the Primitive persecutions, than it doth in *England* at this day. Their principles and profound contrivances they can *Hide*; but their *Malignity* goes stark naked, and is almost grown past-shame. They talk against *Mercenary Ministers*, as if they had never read 1 *Cor.* 9. *Mal.* 3. and such other Scriptures: Or, as if they envyed food and rayment to them that watch and labour for their souls, to whom they are commanded to *give double honour*, 1 *Tim.* 5. 17. when they envy not Provender to their horses, nor Fodder to their labouring Ox, nor the crums to their very dogs. But the matter is, that their wit is too scant and narrow for their malice; and therefore the Popish and Malignant enemies have no fairer pretence to cast out the Ministry, then by this engaging the Covetousness of the ignorant and ungodly sort against them. They talk of our want of a just call: But what is it in point of *Calling* that is wanting? *Abilities* say some; *Succession* say others; *Miracles* say others; and indeed its what the *Interest* of *selfish* men doth dictate to the accusers. O that they would tell us what is the due Call; and where is the Ministery on earth that hath it, if we have not? If they would have all laid by that work not Miracles, we may see what they would have done to the Church. If we are not what they would have us be, and do not what they would have us do, why do they not come in charity and meekness, and shew us the course that we should take? If we are fools or besides our selves, it is for them. The God whom we serve, that will shortly judge us, is our witness, that we have chosen the Calling that we are in, for their salvation, and for his glory; and that we labour in it in season and out of season, to please Christ, and to profit them, rather then to please

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or accommodate our flesh. *You* brought *me* into the Ministry: I am confident you know to what ends, and with what intentions I desired it: I was then very ignorant, young and raw: Though my weakness be yet such as I must lament, I must say, to the praise of the great Shepherd of the flock, that he hath since then afforded me precious opportunities, much assistance, and as much encouragement as to any man that I know alive. You know my education and initial weakness was such as forbiddeth me to glory in the flesh: But I will not rob God of his Glory, to avoid the appearance of ostentation, lest I be proud of seeming not to be proud. I doubt not but many thousand souls will thank you, when they have here read that you were the man that led me into the Ministry. And shall I entertain a suspition, that you will ever hearken to those men, that would rob you of the reward of many such works, and engage you against the King of Saints? Is it gain, or ease, or worldly advantages that continueth me in this work? Let me speak as a fool, seeing it is for the Lord, in imitation of *Paul* that was no fool. Was I not capable of Secular and Military advancement as well as others that are grown great? Did I ever sollicite you so much as for my arrears (which is many hundred pounds)? You could scarce do the thing that would gratifie my flesh more, then to silence and depose me from the Ministry. Might I consult with the flesh, I should be more against my own employment then many of my enemies are. Did I but turn Physitian, I could get more worldly wealth: And my Patients would not be so froward, and quarrelsom, and unthankful, as most Ministers find their carnal auditors to be. When men come to me for Phy-

ſick for their *bodies*, how ſubmiſſive are they? and how do they intreate? and what thanks after will they return? But when we would help their ſouls, what cavils, and quarrels, and unthankful obſtinacy do we meet with? We muſt be much beholden to them to accept our help, and all will not ſerve turn. My Patients that have bodily diſeaſes will pay me, if I would take it: But if by giving them twice as much as I receive, I could ſatisfie and further the cure of diſeaſed ſouls, how joyful ſhould I be? And muſt we deny our ſelves and all things in the world, for our peoples ſakes, and after all be reproached as if we were a *mercenary generation*, and ſought our ſelves! O how will God confound this ingratitude, when he comes to judge? Something they might ſay, if the Miniſters of *England* had the proviſion of the French and other Popiſh Clergy. (I will not preſume to compare now our Caling, fidelity and maintenance, with Magiſtrates, Judges and men of other profeſſions.) Should I ſuppoſe the Magiſtracy epitomized in you, and the Miniſtery in me, I ſhould give you an undue advantage: For I ſuppoſe there are far more Miniſters better then me, then there are Magiſtrates better then you. And yet I think you would not judge of me, as the Miniſters are judged of. As there are no ſuch Commiſſioners for ejection of ſcandalous inſufficient negligent Magiſtrates, as are for the ejection of ſuch Miniſters, ſo if there were, I ſhould not doubt, but you would quickly ſee which part were lyable to more exceptions. But when I look on the faithful Miniſters round about me, (how many of them could I name!) with whom my conſcience tells me I am not worthy to be compared in Holineſs, I am then amazed at the ingratitude of the Apoſtates of this age.

age. How constantly and zealously do they preach in publick, at home and abroad, some of them many times a week? How diligently do they instruct the ignorant in private, from house to house? How unblamably, and meekly, and self-denyingly do they behave themselves? And are men that once made profession of Religion, become the enemies of such a Ministry? [*O my soul, come not thou into their secret; unto their assembly mine honour be not thou united*] *Gen.* 49. 6. I had rather be in the case of Turks, yea of Cannibals, then of those men.

I know that many think our very ignorant Dividers to have more illumination, and that the Pastors of the flocks are carnal ignorant men: (As the blind man that rusht against another, and asked him, whether he were blind, that could not go out of his way.) But I have long tryed the spirits; and I have found that these Cameleons have nothing within but lungs: and that straw and little sticks may make the quickest and the lightest blaze, but will not make a durable fire, as the bigger fewel doth. A Bittern hath a lowder voice then a Swan or Eagle. And in some one thing a bungler may excell a better workman. And what if one Minister excell in one gift, and another in another, and few in all? Is not this like the Primitive administration? You be not angry with your apple-tree that it bears not plumbs, nor with your pear-tree that it bears not figs?

But I have been too tedious. I beseech you interpret not any of these words as intended for accusation or suspition of your self: God forbid you should ever fall from that integrity, that I am perswaded you once had. But my eye is on the Times with grief, and on my *Antient, Dearest Friend* with *Love*. And in an age of Iniqui-

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ty and Temptation, my conscience and the world shall never say, that I was unfaithful to my friend, and forbore to tell him of the common dangers.

Dear Friend, take heed of a glittering flattering world. Remember that greatness makes few bad men good, and few good men better. As *Seneca* saith, The Carkaise is as truly dead that is embalmed, as that which is drag'd to the grave with hooks. [*And this I say, the time is short: It remaineth that they that weep be as if they wept not, and they that rejoyce as though they rejoyced not, and they that buy as though they possessed not, and they that use this world as they that use it not, for the fashion of this world passeth away.*] 1 *Cor.* 7. 29, 30, 31. And when the soul of the worldly fool is required of him, then whose shall all their dignities, and honors, and riches be? In the mean time, God judgeth not by outward appearance, as man judgeth, nor honoureth any for being honoured of men.

Juven. *Solus honor merito qui datur, ille datur.*

These truths (well known to you) I thought meet here to set before your eyes, not knowing whether I shall any more converse with you in the flesh; and also to desire you seriously to read over these popular Sermons (perswaded to the Press by the importunity of some faithful Brethren, that love a mean discourse on so necessary a subject:) Watch and pray, that you enter not into temptation. I rest,

Sept. 12. 1659. Your Friend,

Richard Baxter.

The Preface.

Readers:

I Here present to your serious consideration, a Subject of such Necessity and Consequence, that the Peace and Safety of Churches, Nations, families and souls do lie upon it. The Eternal God was the Beginning and the End, the Interest, the attractive, the confidence, the desire, the delight, the All of man in his upright uncorrupted State. Though the Creator planted in mans Nature the principle of Natural Self-love, as the spring of his endeavours for Self-preservation, and a notable part of the engine by which he governeth the world, yet were the parts subservient to the Whole, and the whole to God: And Self-love did subserve the Love of the Universe, and of God: and man desired his own Preservation, for these higher Ends. When sin stept in, it broke this order: and taking advantage from the natural innocent principle of self-love, it turned man from the Love of God, and much abated his Love to his neighbour and the publick good, and turned him to Himself by an inordinate self-love, which terminateth in himself, and principally in his Carnal-self, instead of God and the Common good: so that Self is become All to Corrupted nature, as God was All to Nature in its integrity. Selfishness is the souls Idolatry, and Adultery: the sum of its Original and increased Pravity; the Beginning and End, the life and strength of actual sin: even as the Love of God is the Rectitude and Fidelity of the soul, and the sum of all our special Grace, and the Heart of the New Creature, and the life and strength of actual holiness. Selfishness in one word expresseth all our Aversion Positively,

tively, as the want of the Love of God *expresseth it* Privatively; *and all our* sin *is summarily in these two: Even as all our Holiness is summarily in the* Love of God *and in* self-denyal. *It is the work of the Holy Ghost by sanctifying grace to bring off the soul again from* Self *to* God. *Self-denyal therefore is half the essence of Sanctification. No man hath any more* Holiness, *then he hath* Self-denyal. *And therefore the Law, (which the Sanctifying Spirit writeth on the heart) doth set up* God *in the* first Table, *and our* neighbour *in the* second, *against the usurpation and encroachment of this* Self. *It saith nothing of Love or Duty to our selves as such expressly. In seeking the* Honour *and* Pleasing of God, *and the* Good of our neighbour, *we shall most certainly* find *our own* Felicity, *which* nature *teacheth us to* desire. *So that all the Law is Fulfilled in* Love, *which includeth* Self-denyal, *as* Light *includeth the* expulsion *of* darkness, *or rather as* Loyalty *includeth a Cessation of Rebellion, and a rejection of the Leaders of it, and as conjugal fidelity includeth the rejection of Harlots. The very meaning of the first Commandment is* [Thou shalt Love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, *&c.*] *which is the sum of the first Table, and the Commandment that animateth all the rest. The very meaning of the last Commandment is* [Thou shalt Love thy neighbour as thy self] *which is the summary of the second Table, and in General forbiddeth all particular injuries to others, not enumerated in the fore-going precepts, and secondarily animateth the four antecedent precepts. The fifth Commandment looking to both Tables, and conjoyning them, commandeth us to Honour our Superiours in Authority; both as they are the Officers of God, and so participatively* Divine, *and as they are the* Heads *of humane Societies, and our subjection necessary to Common good, so that* Self-denyal *is principally required in the* first Commandment, *that is, The* denying *of* self *as opposite to God, and his Interest. And* self-denyal *is required in the Last Commandment; that is, The denying of* self *as it is an enemy to our neighbours Right and well-fare, and would draw from him unto our* selves. Self-love *and* self-seeking *as opposite to our neighbours good, is the thing forbidden in that Commandment: and Charity or Loving our neighbour as our selves, and desiring his Welfare as our own, is the thing commanded.* Self-denyal *is required in the fifth*

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Commandment in a double respect, according to the double respect of the Commandment. 1. *In respect to God, whose Governing Authority is exercised by Governours, their Power being a beam of his Majesty, the fifth Commandment requireth us to deny our selves by due subjection, and by honouring our Superiours; that is, to deny our own aspiring desires, and our refractory minds, and disobedient* self-willedness, *and to take heed that we suffer not within us, any proud or rebellious dispositions or thoughts, that would lift us up above our Rulers, or exempt us from subjection to them.* 2. *In respect to humane Societies, for whose Good Authority and Government is appointed, the fifth Commandment obligeth us to deny our Private interest, and in all competitions to prefer the publick good: and maketh a promise of temporal peace and welfare in a special manner to those that in obedience to this Law, do prefer the Honour of Government, and the Publick Peace and welfare, before their* Own. *Thus* Charity *as opposed to* Selfishness, *and including* Self-denyal, *is the very* sum *and* fulfilling *of the Law: And* Selfishness *is the radical comprehensive sin (containing uncharitableness) which breaks it all.*

And as the Law, so also the Redeemer, in his Example and his Doctrine, doth teach us, and that more plainly and urgently, this lesson of Self-denyal. The life of Christ is the pattern which the Church must labour to imitate: And Love *and* Self-denyal *were the summary of* his *life: Though yet he had no* sinful self *to deny, but only* natural Self. *He denyed* himself *in* avoiding sin; *but we must deny our selves in* returning from *it. He loved not his Life, in comparison of his love to his Father, and to his Church. He appeared without desirable form or comliness:* He was despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief: he bore our griefs, and carryed our sorrows, and was esteemed stricken, smitten of God and afflicted: he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities; the chastizement of our peace was laid upon him: the Lord laid upon him the iniquity of us all. He was oppressed and afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth: he is brought as a Lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her sheerers is dumb, so he opened not his mouth. He was taken from prison and from judgement —— he was cut off out of

the land of the living; for the transgression of his people was he stricken: ——— It pleased the Lord to bruise him; he put him to grief ——] Isa. 53. *What was his whole life, but the exercise of* Love *and* self-denyal? *He* denyed himself *in* Love *to his* Father, *obeying him to the death, and pleasing him in all things. He* denyed himself *in* Love *to* mankind, *in bearing our transgressions, and* redeeming us from the curse, by being made a curse for us, *Gal.* 3. 13. He made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men, and being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself and became obedient unto death, even the death of the Cross] *Phil.* 2. 6, 7, 8. And this he did to teach us by his example, *to deny our selves, to* [be like minded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind, that nothing be done through strife or vain-glory, but in lowliness of mind that each esteem others better then themselves; Looking not every man after his *own* matters, but every man also after the things of others; and thus the same mind should be in us that was in Christ Jesus] *Phil.* 2. 3, 4, 5. *He denyed himself also in obedient submission to Governours. He was subject to* Joseph *and* Mary, Luk. 2. 51. *He paid tribute to* Cæsar, *and wrought a Miracle for money rather then it should be unpaid,* Matth. 17. 24, 25, 26. *He disowned a personal worldly Kingdom,* Joh. 18. 36. *when the people would have made him a King, he avoided it,* Joh. 6. 15. *as being not a Receiver, but a giver of Kingdoms: He would not so much as once play the part of a Judge or divider of inheritances, teaching men that they must be justly* made *such, before they do the work of Magistrates,* Luk. 12. 14. *And his Spirit in his Apostles teacheth us the same doctrine,* Rom. 13. 1 Pet. 2. 13, 14, 15, 16, 17. Eph. 6. 1, 5. *And they seconded his example by their own, that we might be followers of them as they were of Christ. What else was the life of holy* Paul *and the rest of the Apostles, but a constant exercise of* Love *and* Self-denyal? *Labouring and travelling night and day, enduring the basest usage from the world, and undergoing indignities and manifold sufferings from unthankful men, that they might please the Lord, and edifie and save the souls of men; and living in poverty that they might help the world to the everlasting riches.*

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In a word, as Love *is the* fulfilling *of the whole Law, as to the positive part, so is* selfishness *the evil that stands in contrariety thereto, even* self-conceitedness, self-willedness, self-love, *and* self-seeking; *and thus far* self-denyal *is the sum of our obedience as to the* terminus à quo: *and Christ hath peremptorily determined in his Gospel, that* If any man will come after him, he must deny himself and take up his Cross and follow him: and that whosoever *will put in a reserve, but for the* saving of his Life, shall lose it; and whosoever will lose his life for his sake shall find it, *Matth.* 16. 24, 25. *And that he that doth not follow him, bearing his Cross, and that* forsaketh not all he hath for him, cannot be his Disciple, *Luk.* 14. 27, 33.

According to the nature of these holy Rules and Examples, is the Nature of the Workings of the Spirit of Christ upon the soul: He usually beginneth in shewing man his sin and misery, his utter insufficiency to help himself, his alienation from God, and enmity to him, his blindness and deadness, his emptiness and nothingness, and then he brings him from himself to Christ, and sheweth him his fulness and sufficiency, and by Christ he cometh to the Father, and God doth receive his own again. It is one half of the work of Sanctification, to cast out Selves *from our* Understandings, *our* Wills, *our* Affections, *and our* Conversations; *to subdue* self-conceitedness, self-willedness, self-love, *and* self-seeking: *to mortifie our carnal wisdom, and our Pride, and our concupiscence, and our earthly members: And the other (and chiefest part) consisteth in setting up God where* Self *did rule: that his Wisdom may be our Guide; his Will our Law; his Gooodness the chiefest object of our Love, and his service the work and business of our lives. The Spirit doth convince us that we are not our* Own, *and have no power at all to dispose of our selves or any thing we have, but under God, as he commands us: It convinceth us that God is our* Owner *and absolute Lord, and that as we are wholly his, so we must be wholly devoted to him, and prefer his interest before our own, and have no interest of our own, but what is his, as derived from him, and subservient to him;* Fear *doth begin this work of* Self-denyal; *but it's* Love *that brings us up to sincerity.*

The first state of corrupted man, is a state of selfishness, *and servitude to his own Concupiscence; where pride and sensuality bear rule; and have no more resistance, than now and then some frightening uneffectual check.*

When God is calling men out of this corrupted selfish *state, he usually (or oft at least) doth cast them into a state of* Fear; *awakening them to see their last condition, and terrifying them by the Belief of his Threatnings, and the sense of his indignation; and making use of their* Self-love, *to cause them to fly from the wrath to come, and to cry out to the messengers of Christ,* What shall we do to be saved?

Some by these Fears *are but troubled and restrained a little while, and quickly overcoming them, settle again in their* selfish sensual *senseless state: some have the beginnings of holy* Love *conjunct with Fear (of whom more anon.) And some do from this principle of* Self-love *alone, betake themselves to a kind of Religious course, and forsake the practise of those grosser sins that bred their* Fears, *and fall upon the practise of Religious duties, and also with some kind of* faith *do trust on the satisfaction and merits of Christ, that by this means they may get some* hopes *that they shall escape the everlasting misery which they fear. All this Religion, that is animated by* Fear alone, *without the* Love of God and Holiness, *is but preparatory to a state of grace; and if men* rest *here, it is but a state of Hypocrisie or self-deceiving religiousness: For it is still the old Principle of* selfishness *that reigns. Till* Love *hath brought man up to God, he hath no higher end then* Himself.

The true mark by which these slavish *professors and hypocrites may discern themselves, is this: They do the Good which they would not do, and the evil which they do not, they would do. They had rather live a sinful life, if they durst; and they had rather be excused from Religious duties (except that little outward part, which custom and their credit engage them to perform:) They are but like the caged birds, that though they may sing in a Sun-shine day, had rather be at liberty in the woods. They love not a life of perfect holiness, though they are forced to submit to some kind of Religiousness, for fear of being damned. If they had their freest choice, they had rather live in the Love*

of

of the creature, then in the love of God; and in the pleasures of the flesh, then in the holy course that pleaseth God.

The third state, is the state of Love: *and none but this is a state of true* Self-denyal, *and of Justification and Salvation. When we reach to this, we are sincere: we have then the Spirit of Adoption, disposing us to go to God as to a Father.*

But this Love *is not in the same degree in all the sanctified. Three degrees of it we may distinctly observe.* 1. *Oft-times in the beginning of a true Conversion, though the seed of Love is cast into the soul, and the Convert had rather enjoy God, then the world, and had rather live in perfect holiness, then in any sin, yet* Fear *is so active, that he scarse observeth the workings of the* Love *of God within him: He is so taken up with the sense of sin and misery, that he hath little sense of love to God, and perhaps may doubt whether he hath any or none.*

2. *When these* Fears *begin a little to abate, and the soul hath attained somewhat of the sense of Gods Love to it self, it Loveth him more observably, and hath some leisure to think of the riches of his grace, and of his Infinite excellencies, and attractive goodness, and not only to Love him because he Loveth us, and hath been Merciful to us, but also because he is Goodness it self, and we were made to Love him. But yet in this* middle *degree of Love, the soul is much more* frequently and sensibly *exercised in minding it* self *then God, and in studying its* own *preservation, then the honour and interest of the Lord. In this state it is, that Christians are almost all upon the enquiry after marks of Grace in themselves; and asking* [How shall I know that I have this or that grace, and that I perform this or that duty in sincerity, and that I am reconciled to God, and shall be saved?] *Which are needful questions, but should not be more insisted on, then questions about our duty and the Interest of Christ. In this state, though a Christian hath the Love of God, yet having much of his antient* Fears, *and Self-love, and the Love of God being yet too weak, he is much more in studying his* Safety *then his* Duty; *and asketh oftner, How may I be sure that I am a true believer? then, What is the duty of a true believer? There is yet too much of* Self *in his Religion.*

3. *In the* third *degree of Love to God, the soul is ordinarily*

and

and observably carryed quite above it self to God; and mindeth more the Will and Interest of God, then its own Consolation or Salvation: Not that we must at any time lay by the care of our Salvation, as if it were a thing that did not belong to us, or that we should separate the ordinate Love of our selves from the Love of God, or set his Glory and our Salvation in an opposition: But the Love of God, in this Degree, *is* sensibly predominant, *and we refer even our* own Salvation *to his* Interest and Will: *In this Degree, a Christian is grown more deeply sensible*; he is not his own, *but* his *that made him and redeemed him*; *and that his principal study must not be for himself, but for God*; *and that his* own *interest is in it self an inconsiderable thing, in comparison of the interest of the Lord, and that Rewarding us with Consolation is Gods part, and loving and serving him is ours (assisted by his grace)*; *and that the diligent study and practice of our duty, and the lively exercise of Love to God, is the surest way to our Consolation.*

In our first corrupt *estate we are* careless *of* our souls, *and are taken up with earthly cares. In our estate of* Preparation *we are* careful for our souls, *but meerly from the principle of* Self-love. *In our* first Degree *of the* state of saving grace *we have the Love of God in us*; *but its little observed, by reason of the passionate fears and cares of our own salvation that most take us up. In our second degree of holy Love, we look more sensibly after God for himself, but so that we are yet* most *sensibly minding the Interest of our own souls, and enquiring after assurance of salvation. In our third Degree of saving grace, we still continue the care of our salvation and an* ordinate self-love; *but we are sensible that the Happiness of* Many, *even of* Church and Commonwealth, *and the* Glory of God, *and the* accomplishment of his Will, *is incomparably more excellent and desirable then our own felicity: And therefore we set our selves to please the Lord, and study what is acceptable to him, and how we may do him all the service that possibly we can, being confident that he will look to our felicity while we look to our duty; and that we cannot be miserable while we are* wholly his, *and devoted to his service. We are now more in the* exercise *of* Grace, *when before we were more in* trying *whether we have it: Before we were wont to say,* O

that

that I were sure that I love God in sincerity! *Now we are more in these desires!* O that I could Know and Love him more! and serve him better! that I knew more of his holy will, and could more fully accomplish it! and O that I were more serviceable to him! and O that I could see the full prosperity of his Church, and the glory of his Kingdom! *This high degree of the* Love *of God, doth cause us to take our* selves *as* Nothing, *and* God *as* All; *and as before conversion we were careless of our* souls, *through ignorance, presumption or security, and after conversion were* careful of our souls, *through the power of convincing awakening grace; so now we have somewhat* above our souls *(much more our bodies) to mind and care for: so that though still we must examine and observe our* selves, *and that* for our selves, *yet* more for God *then* for our selves: *When we are mindful of God, he will not be unmindful of us: When it is our care to please him, the rest of our care we may cast* on *him, who hath promised to care for us. Even when we suffer* according to his will, we may commit the keeping of our souls to him in well doing as to a faithful Creator, 1 Pet. 4. 19. *And it is not possible in this* more excellent way *(1 Cor. 12. 31.) to be guilty of a careless neglect of our salvation, or of the want of a necessary Love to our selves; For the higher containeth the lower, and perfection containeth those degrees that are found in the imperfect: This neglect of our* selves *through the Love of God, is consequentially the most provident securing of our selves: This carelesness is the wisest care: This ignorance of good and evil for our selves, while we know the Lord, and know our duty, is the wisest way to prevent the evil: To be* something *in* our selves, *is to be Nothing: But if we be Nothing in* our selves, *and God be All to us, in him we shall be* something. *Be not wanting to God, and I am sure you cannot be wanting to* your selves. *He will* Reward, *if you'l* Obey.

I have shewed you hitherto the Nature *and* Necessity *of* Self-denyal: *O that I could next shew you the Nations, the Churches, that are such indeed as I have described! But when I look into the world, when I look into the Churches of all sorts, and consider men of all degrees, my soul is even amazed and melted into grief, to think how far the forwardest professors are swerved from their*

holy Rule and pattern! O grievous case! how rare are self-denying *men? Nothing in the world doth more assure me, that the number that shall be saved are very few: When Nothing is more evident in Scripture, then that none but the* self-denying *shall be saved: and nothing more evident in the world, then that* self-denying *men are very few. Would God but excuse men in this one point, and take up with preaching and praying, and numbering our selves with the strictest party, then I should hope that many comparatively would be saved. Would he give men leave to seek themselves in a Religious way, and to be zealous only from a* selfish *principle, and would he but abate men this* self-denyal *and the* superlative Love of God, *I should hope true godliness were not rare. But if* self-denyal *be the mark, the nature of a Saint, and this is effected by the* Love of God, *then alas, how thin are they in the world! and how weak is grace even in those few? It is the daily grief of my soul to observe, how the world is captivated to it SELF; and what sway this odious sin doth bear among the forwardest professors of Religion; and how blind men are that will not see it; and that it hath so far prevailed that few men lament it, or strive against it, or will bear the most suitable remedy. Alas, when we have prevailed with careless souls, to mind their salvation, to read, and pray, and hold communion with the godly, and seem well-qualified Christians, how few are brought to* self-denyal! *and how strong is* Self *still in those few? What a multitude that seem of the highest form, in zeal, and opinions, and duties, delude themselves with a* selfish *kind of Religiousness? And it grieveth my soul to think, how little the most excellent means prevail, even with Professors themselves, against this sin! What abundance of labour seemeth to be lost, that we bestow against it? When I have preached over all these following Sermons against it, (though grace hath made them effectual with some, yet)* selfishness *still too much bears sway in many that heard them. O what a rooted sin is this! How powerful and obstinate? Men that seem diligently to hear, and like the Sermon, and write it, and repeat it when they come home, and commend it, do yet continue* selfish. *And they that walk evenly and charitably among us in all appearance, as long as they are smoothly dealt with, when once they are but toucht, and crost in their* self-interest,

reſt, *do preſently ſhew, that there is that within them which we or they before perceived not. It was (doubtleſs) from too much experience of the* ſelfiſhneſs *even of Profeſſors of Religion, and of the ſucceſsfulneſs of temptations in this kind, that Satan did tell God ſo boldly, that* Job *would ſin if he were but touched in his* ſelf-intereſt: *Job* 1. 9, 10, 11. & 2. 4, 5. [Doth *Job (ſaith he)* fear God for nothing? haſt not thou made an hedge about him, and about his houſe, and about all that he hath on every ſide? Thou haſt bleſſed the work of his hand, and his ſubſtance is increaſed in the Land: But put forth thy hand now, and touch all that he hath, and he will curſe thee to thy face.] *As if he ſhould have ſaid,* [*Glory not of* Job *or any of thy ſervants: It is not thee, but themſelves that they ſeek: They ſerve thee but for their own commodity: It is* Self *and not* God *that ruleth them, and that they do all this for: Seem but to be their enemy; and touch their ſelf-intereſt, and croſs them in their commodity, that they may ſerve thee for nothing, and then ſee who will ſerve thee.*] *This was the boaſt of Satan againſt the Saints of the moſt high, which hypocrites that encouraged him hereto would have fulfilled, and which God doth glory in confuting: and therefore he gives the Devil leave to try* Job *in this point, and putteth all that he had into his power,* v. 12. *And when Satan by this ſucceeded not, he yet boaſteth that if he might but touch him more neerly in his* ſelf-intereſt, *he doubted not to prevail,* c. 2. 4, 5. [Skin for skin, yea all that a man hath will he give for his life: Put but forth thy hand now, and touch his bone and his fleſh, and he will curſe thee to thy face.] *This confidence had Satan, even againſt ſuch a ſervant of the Lord,* [That there was none like him in the earth, a perfect and an upright man, that feared God & eſchewed evil c. 1. 8. *And though the power of grace in* Job *did ſhame the boaſts of Satan, yet how frequently doth he prevail with men that ſeem Religious? How truly may he ſay of many among us* [Now they ſeem godly, but let the times turn, & godlineſs undo them in the world, and then ſee whether they will be godly: Now they ſeem faithful to their Paſtors and Brethren! but give them a ſufficient reward, and ſee whither they will not play the *Judas*: Now they ſeem peaceable humble men: but touch them in their ſelf-intereſt, croſs them in

their commodity or reputation, by an injury, yea or by justice or necessary reproof; and then see what they will prove] *O that the Devil could not truly boast of thousands that by a few foul words, or by crossing their* self-willedness, *he can make them speak evil of their neighbours, and fill them with malice and bitterness against their truest friends. Oh where are the men that maintain their Love, and Meekness, and Concord, any longer then they are pleased, and their wills and interests are complyed with, or not much contradicted?*

Besides what I have more largely spoken, of this master common sin, in the following discourse, take notice here of a few of the discoveries of it.

1. *Observe but the* striving that there is for Command and Dignity, and Riches, *and this even among Professors of Religion, and judge by this whether they are* self-denying *men. Who is it for but themselves that men make such a stir, for offices, and honours, and places of superiority? Surely if it were for the good of others, they would not be so eager and so forward. We cannot perceive that their Charity is so hot, as to make them so Ambitious to be serviceable to their Brethren. If that be it, let them keep their service till it be desired or much needed, and not be so eager to do men good against their wills, and without necessity. As* Greg. Mag. *saith of the Ministry,* [Si non ad elationis culpam, sed ad utilitatem adipisci desiderat, prius vires suas cùm eo quidem subiturus onere metiatur: ut & impar abstineat, & ad id cum metu cui se sufficere existimat accedat.] *Men use not to be ambitious of duty or trouble. He that desireth Government ultimately and principally for himself, desireth Tyranny, and not a lawful Government, whose ultimate end is the common good. And will not the wrath of the King of Kings be kindled without so much ado, nor Hell be purchased at cheaper rates, then all the contrivance, cares and hazards, that ambitious men do draw upon themselves?* O ambitio, (inquit *Bernardus*) ambientium crux, quomodo omnes torques? Omnibus places, nil acrius cruciat, nil molestius inquietat, nil tamen apud miseros mortales celebrius negotiis ejus.] *Wonderful! that such abundant warning taketh not these proud aspiring minds! They set up or admired them but yesterday, whom they see taken down*

and

and despised to day, and see their honour turned to scorn, and yet they imitate their folly! They see the sordid relicts of the most renowned Conquerors, and Princes levelled with the dirt; and yet they have not the wit to take warning, and humble themselves that they may be exalted! They know how death will shortly use them, and read of the terrours that pride and ambition bring men to; but all this doth not bring them to their wits. When Death it self comes, then they are as sneaking shrinking worms as any: and the worm of ambition that fed upon their hearts in their prosperity, doth breed a gnawing worm in their consciences, which will torment them everlastingly. But (ut Juvenal.)

——— Mors sola fatetur,
Quantula sunt hominum corpuscula ———

This Ærugo mentis, *as* Ambrose *calls it*; *and* regnandi dira cupido (ut Virg.) *doth keep men from knowing what they know, and denyeth them the use of their understandings. All former professions are forgotten; repentings are repented of; the best parts are corrupted and sold to the Devil (as truly, as Witches sell themselves, though not so grosly). and men are any thing that self would have them be, where the humor of Ambition doth prevail, and this secret poison insinuateth it self into the mind: This* subtile malum (ut *Bernard*) secretum virus, pestis occulta, doli artifex, mater hypocrisis, livoris parens, vitiorum origo, tinea sanctitatis, excæcatrix cordium, ex remediis morbos creans, ex medicina languorem generans.] *The God of Vengeance that abhorreth the Proud, and beholdeth them afar off, and that cast aspirers out of Paradise, will shortly take these Gallants down, and lay them low enough, and make them wish they had* Denyed themselves.

2. *Observe but* mens desire of applause, and their great impatience of dispraise, *and judge by this of their* self-denyal. *Who is it that is angry with those that* Praise *them, yea though they exceed their bounds, and ascribe more to them then is due? Saith* Seneca [Si invenimus qui nos bonos viros dicat, qui prudentes, qui sanctos, non sumus modica laudatione contenti;

quicquid in nos adulatio fine pudore congessit, tanquam debitum prehendimus: Optimos nos esse, sapientissimosque affirmantibus assentimus, quum sciamus illos sæpe multa mentiri. Adeo quoque indulgemus nobis, ut laudari velimus in id, cui contraria maxime facimus.] *Even proud men would be praised for Humility, and covetous men for Liberality, and fools for Wisdom, and ignorant men for Learning; and treacherous hypocrites for sincerity and plain honesty; and few of the best do heartily distaste their own commendations, or refuse any thing thats offered them, though beyond desert. But if they think they are lightly or hardly thought of, or hear of any that speak against them, or dishonour them in the eyes of men, you shall see how little they can* deny themselves. *O how the hearts of many that seemed godly men, will swell against them that speak to their disparagement? What uncharitable, unchristian deportment, will a little injury produce? What bitter words! What estrangedness, and division, if not plain hatred, and reviling, and revenge! Yea, it were well (in comparison) if a due Reproof, from neighbours or from Ministers (that are bound to do it by the Lord) would not draw forth this secret Venom, and shew the world the scarcity of* self-denyal. *Let others speak never so well of God, and of all good men, and be never so faithful or serviceable in the Church, yet if they do but speak ill of them (though its like deservedly and justly) these* selfish *men cannot abide them. By this you may perceive what interest is strongest with them; were they carryed up from* themselves *by the Love of God, they would* delight *to hear the* Praise *of* God, *and of their Brethren, and be* afraid *to hear their* own; *and say from their hearts,* Not unto us O Lord, not unto us, but to thy name be glory, Psalm 115. 1. *To praise another may be our* gain *(in the discharge of a duty, and exercise of Love) but to be Praised our selves is usually our* danger. *Pride needeth no such fuel or bellows.* Non laudato, sed laudantibus prodest, *saith* Augustine. Esse humilem est nolle laudari in se: Qui in se laudari appetit, superbus esse convincitur, inq. id. *It is the expectation of these proud and selfish men, that tempteth men to the odious art of flattery, when they find it is the way to please. And when one is flattering, and the other pleased with it, what a foolish and sordid employment have they?*

[Et

[Et Vani sunt qui laudantur, & mendaces qui laudant :] *saith* Austin. *It is God to whom the Praise is due, whom we know we cannot praise too much, whose praises we should love to speak and hear.* [In laude Dei est securitas laudis ; ut laudatur non timet, ne de laudato erubescat] *saith* Austin. *We may boldly Praise him, of whom we are sure we never need to be ashamed. It is* God *in his servants that we must praise, and it is only his Interest in our own Praise that we must regard.*

3. *Observe but* upon what account it is that most mens Affections are carried to, or against their neighbours, *and then judge by this of their* self-denyal. *Even men that would be accounted godly, do Love or hate men according as their* self-interest *commandeth them, more then according to the* Interest *of* Christ. *Let a man be never so eminent in holiness, and never so useful and serviceable in the Church, and one that hath proved faithful in the greatest tryals, if he do but oppose a* selfish *man, and be thought by him to be against him, he hateth him at the heart, or hath as base contemptuous thoughts of him, as malice can suggest. He can as easily nullifie all his graces, and multiply his smallest infirmities into a swarm of crimes, by a censorious mind and a slanderous tongue, as if vertue and vice received their form and denominations from the respect of mens minds and waies to* him ; *and all men were so far good or evil, as they* please him, *or* displease him ; *and he expects that others should esteem men such as he is pleased to describe or call them. Let all the Countrey be the witnesses of a mans upright and holy life, yea let the multitude of the ungodly themselves be convinced of it, so far as that their consciences are forced to bear witness of him, as* Herod *did of* John, Mark 6. 20. that he was a just man and an holy ; *yet can the* selfish *hypocrite that is against him, blot out his uprightness with a word, and make him to be Proud, or False, or Covetous, or what his malice please ; yea make him an* Hypocrite *as he is indeed himself. No man can be good in their eyes that is against them : or if he be acknowledged honest in the main, it is mixt with exceptions and charges enough, to make him seem vile while they confess him honest : and if they acknowledge him a man, they will withal describe him to be so plaguy or leprous, that he shall be thought not fit for humane converse.* Such a man.

man is an honest man, *say they*; but he is a peevish, humorous, self-conceited fellow: *And why so? Because he is against some opinion or interest of* theirs: *He is proud, because he presumeth to dissent from them, or reprehend them*: *He* rayleth, *every time he openeth* their errours, *or telleth* them of their mis-doings: *He is a Lyar, if he do but contradict them, and discover their sins, though it be with words of truth and soberness. In a word, no person, no speeches, or writings, no actions can be just, that are against a* selfish *man: In differences at Law,* his *cause is good, because it is* his: *and his* adversaries *is alwaies bad, because it is* against him. *In publick differences, the side that he is on (that is for him) is alwaies right, let it be never so wrong in the eyes of all impartial men: The cause is good that he is for, (which is alway that which seems for him) though it be undoubted Treason and perfidious Rebellion, accompanyed with perjury, murder, and oppression: And the cause must be alwaies bad that is against* him; *and they are the Traytors, and Rebels, and Oppressors that* resist him. *His* own murders *are* honourable Victories, *and other mens* Victories *are cruel and barbarous murders. All is naught that is against themselves. They are Affected to men according to their* self-interest: *they* judge *of them and their actions according as they do* Affect *them: they* speak *of them and* deal *by them according to this corrupted* judgement.

But as for any that they imagine do Love and Honour them, they can Love them and speak tenderly of them, be they what they will. A little grace or vertue in them, seemeth much: And their parts seem excellent that indeed are mean: If they drop into Perjury, Fornication, Treason, or such like scandalous sins, they have alwayes a mantle of Love to cover them: or if they blame them a little, they are easily reconciled, and quickly receive them to their former honour. If they have any thing like Grace, its easily believed to be Grace indeed, if they be but on their side: If they have nothing like Grace, they can Love them for their good natures, but indeed it is for themselves.

When this self-love *describeth any person, when it writeth Histories, or Controversies about any cause or person that they are concerned in, how little credit do they deserve! Whence is it else that we have such contrary descriptions of Persons and Actions in*

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the writings of the several Parties as we find ? How holy, and temperate, and exceedingly industrious a man was Calvin, *if the whole multitude of sober, godly men that knew him may be credited; or if we may believe his most constant intimate acquaintance; or if we may judge by his judicious, pious, numerous writings : And yet if the Papists may be believed (contrary to the witness of a Popish City where he was bred)* he was a stigmatized Sodomite; he was a glutton *(that eat but once a day, and that sparingly)*; he was an idle fleshly man *(that preached usually every day, and wrote so many excellent Volumes)*; and he dyed blaspheming and calling on the Devil *(that is, in longing and praying for his remove to Christ, crying daily, How long Lord! how long!) And how comes all this inhumane forgery about ? Why, one lying Pelagian Apostate* Bolsecke *wrote it, (whom* Calvin *had shamed for his errours:) and a peevish Lutherane;* Schlusselburgius *hath related part of it from him; and this is sufficient warrant for the Papists, ordinarily to perswade their followers it is true, and with seared Consciences to publish it in their writings, though* Massonius *and some other of the soberer sort, among themselves, do shame them for the forgery. So do they by* Luther, Beza, *and many more.*

Among our selves here, how certainly and commonly is it known to all impartial men acquainted with them, that the persons nicknamed Puritans *in* England *have been (for the most part) a people fearing God and studing an holy life, and of an upright conversation; so that the impartial did bear them witness, that in the scorners mouth, a* Puritan *was one that was* Integer vitæ, scelerisque purus; *and this was the reason of their suffered-scorn; and that the name was the Devils common engine in this Land, to shame people from reading and hearing Sermons, and praying, and avoiding the common sins, and seriously seeking their salvation : A Puritan was one that* [Believeth *(unfeignedly)* that God is : and that he is a Rewarder of them that diligently seek him] Heb. 12.6. *that strives to enter in at the strait gate, and lives as men that believe that Heaven is worth their labour, and that Gods Kingdom and its Righteousness should be first sought,* Matth. 6.33. *And yet if* Fitz Simon *and other Jesuites, and Bishop* Bancroft, *Dr.* P. Heylin, *Mr.* Tho. Pierce, *and other*

such among us are to be believed, what an abominable odious sort of people are they (and especially the Presbyterians, who are the greatest part of them) what intolerable, hypocritical, bloody men * *? And what's the reason of these accusations? Much is pretended; but the summe of all is, that they were in some things against the* Opinions *or Interests of the persons that abuse them: the Jesuites know that they were averse from their doctrines and practices. The rest are angry because they would be excused from two or three Ceremonies, and from Vowing Obedience to the Ceremony-makers. Yea many of their accusers think themselves injured, if not oppressed and persecuted, as long as they are with-held from silencing, ejecting or persecuting these, that would fain serve God according to his Word, as the sufficient Rule, and have nothing imposed on them in matter of Worship, but* Necessary things, *according to the Apostles decree,* Acts 15. 28. *By all this judge how rare* self-denyal *is, when the Interest of mens own Opinions, Persons or Parties, can cause such unchristian dealing from self-esteeming-professors and Preachers of the Gospel.* Selfishness *is the greatest Lyar, and Slanderer, and the most malicious Calumniator in the world.*

* So common it is for selfish men, to make their gain-sayers as Odious as they can devise, that I confess I wondred that I met with no more of this dealing my self, from Papists, Anabaptists, or any that have turned their stile against me: And at last Mr *Pierce* hath answered my expectation; and from my own confession, (not knowing me himself) hath drawn my picture, that I am *Proud, Lazie, False,* an *Hypocrite, Unjust,* a *Reader,* &c. And from this *Botsecks* credit; I make no doubt but the Papists will think they may warrantably describe me, (if I be thought worthy their remembrance) in all following ages; though now I have nothing from them but good words. But it is a small thing to be judged by man, especially when our souls enjoy the Lord.

4. *Observe but* how light most make of their own sins, and how easily they aggravate the sins of others; and how light they make of the good that is in others, in comparison of that which is in themselves, or those that are of their side; *and judge by this of their self-denyal!* Judah *would have judged* Thamar *hardly; but he was not so severe against himself!* David *pronounceth very peremptorily the sentence of death against*

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the offendor, till he heard from Nathan, Thou art the man. *How hard is it to convince a* selfish *hypocrite of any sin that will admit of an excuse or cloak? All the town can see the Pride of some, the Covetousness of others, the unpeaceable unchristian behaviour of others; and yet themselves, that should most observe it, and best discern it, perceive it not, nor will by any means be brought to see it. No Minister can put them down, when they are justifying themselves; nor make them humbly and heartily confess that they have sinned. (But God will ere long convince them irresistibly, and teach their tongues another kind of language.) Let the case of another come before them, and how readily will they adjudge him to penitent confession, reparation, restitution, and through-reformation! But the case is altered, when it becomes their own. Such incompetent Judges are these* selfish *hypocrites.*

5. *Observe but* how easily men fall out with one another, and how hardly they are reconciled, and how much ado any peace-maker shall have to end the difference; and observe also whether all the quarrel be not about some selfish Interest: *and judge by this of their self-denyal. When do they so fall out with men, for wronging God, or the Gospel, or their own souls, as they do for wronging them?*

And if a Minister that can bear an injury against himself, do faithfully rebuke them that deal injuriously against Christ, and against the Church, and the souls of men, (especially if they be Great men in the world that are reproved) its strange to see how self *makes them storm; though they have read what a mark of rebellion, and prognostick of misery, it was even in Kings, to reject the reproofs of the Messengers of the Lord? much more to hate or persecute the reprover.*

6. *Observe also how forward many are, unreasonably to exalt their own understandings, above those that are far wiser then themselves: and judge by this of their* self-denyal. *Though their Brethren or Teachers, have studyed, and prayed, and sought after knowledge, ten times, or twenty times more then they, and have as faithfully obeyed according to their knowledge, and indeed be incomparably beyond them in understanding: yet how commonly shall you meet with unstudied, unexperienced novices (notably*

described, 1 Tim. 3. 6. & 6. 4.) *of undigested notions; and green, and raw apprehensions, that are so puft up, with a little smattering seeming knowledge, that they despise both Ministers and people, that be not of their mind, and vilifie them as a sort of ignorant deluded men. And do they indeed excell us in knowledge as much as they pretend? O that they did! that so we might see the Church furnished with wiser better teachers, and might our selves have the priviledge of being their hearers, and of being better instructed by them? But how evident is it to all that have eyes, that it is in* Pride *and not in* Knowledge *that they excell; and that all this comes from the Dominion of* Self? *and that they speak evil of the things they know not*, Jud. 10.

7. *Observe also* how far men are carryed *by the fond overvaluing of their own opinions against all Reason, and former promises, and against all bonds to God and man; and then judge of their self-denyal. If once they feel a new apprehension, it tickleth them with delight, as being an elevation of their understandings above other mens; and as Parents are fond of their children, because they are their* own, *so are the Proud through the corruption of their minds as fond of an Opinion which they can call their* Own, *if there be any thing of singularity in it to make them seem persons of more then ordinary understanding. And when they are once possessed of it, how partially do they indulge it? How light do they make of the strongest arguments that are brought against it? How contemptuously do they think and speak of the persons, the judgements, the writings, the reasonings of any that are against them? Nay usually they will not be perswaded so much as once to read the writings that contradict them. Or if they do, it is with so much prejudice and partiality, that they have in their minds confuted them, before they read or understand them, and instead of considering the weight of arguments, and comparing faithfully cause with cause, they only study what to say against their adversary (for so they account those that would cross or confute their opinions.)*

Nay observe but what a change a new opinion makes upon them in reference to their former friends. How strange do they look at them that cannot follow them in their fancies? Though before they were their bosom friends, yet without any change in themselves,

selves, they have lost their interest in these changlings: And though before they honoured and praised them, yet alls changed when they themselves are changed; and their friends must seem to have lost their wits or honesty (or never to have had any) as soon as themselves have lost their humility and charity. How much am I able to say of this, from sad exprience of the change of many of my antient friends? Some of them are changed to a reproaching of the Scripture, Church, and Ministry, and Ordinances, and to a denying of the Christian Faith; and these I have lost (for they have lost themselves:) And indeed these have constrained me to withdraw from them my antient Love of complacency, though I have a Love of compassion to them still. Others are secretly ensnared by the Papists: and these I have lost, (though they seem to bear me some respect.) Others are changed to opinions which they think meet to Hide *: and these look strange at me; especially since I wrote against these* Hiders. *Others are changed in the point of Baptism: and these are greatly offended with me, for dissenting and giving the Reasons of my dissent: and what uncharitable dealings some of them have been guilty of, I shall not now express. Some of them have turned to one opinion, and some to another, and almost all that make these turns have left their Charity behind them: Some of them take up new Causes in the Common-wealth: and these are as angry with me as the rest, because I cannot follow them in their changes. How many waies hath a man to lose a* selfish *friend? I was once beloved by all these men: and now I am either hated, or lookt at as a stranger (at least): when I am where I was when I had their Love.*

If I know my heart, I speak not this in any great sense of the loss of my own interest, but in the sense of the lamentable Power and Prevalency of Self-love, *and* self-conceitedness *in the world. And while I am bitterly censured by almost every party, how easily could I recover my interest and reputation with any one of them, if I could but be of their mind and side? How wise and how honest a man could I be with the Anabaptists, if I would but be Rebaptized, and turn to* them? *And how much should I be valved by the Papists, if I would turn to them? The like I may say of all the other forenamed parties: For every one of*

them have by word or writing signified so much to me. Even the Grotian *Prelatists would wipe their mouthes, and speak me fairer, if I could turn to them: Mr.* Pierce *himself, that hath exceeded all men (in his late Book abounding with visible falshoods and unchristian abuse of the servants of the Lord, whom he calleth Puritanes) yet telleth me, page* 212. [We contend for your fellowship, and daily pray for your coming in; if you, by name, should have occasion to pass this way, and present your self with other guests, at the holy Supper of our Lord, no man on earth should be more welcome: but if you and your partners will continue your several separations, and shut your selves out from our Communion, as it were judging your selves unworthy of the Kingdom of God, aud excommunicating your selves, *&c.* ———] *See here the power of* Selfishness! *A man that is painted out as Lazie, a Reader, a proud Hypocrite, and much more, should be as welcome as any man on earth, if he will but have communion with them in their way! how much more if he were but of their party? This would cure Hypocrisie, Pride, and all these crimes. And till we can comply with them, we* [Excommunicate out selves, and judge our selves unworthy of the Kingdom of God.] *He that thinks Bishops should not be as now, Dioceasan, and undertake many hundred Parishes, and then feed and govern them by* others; *and he that submits not to their mode, in a Surplice, Kneeling at the Sacrament, or some form of Prayer, doth therefore judge himself* [unworthy of the Kingdom of God:] *as if Gods Kingdom were confined to* them, *and lay in meats and drinks, and not in Righteousness and Peace! And as if we continued in an excommunication of our selves, because we are not of their party: When yet we deny no Protestants to be our Brethren, nor refuse local Communion with them, so they will grant it us on Scripture-terms: Which if they will not, we will yet hold communion with them in several Congregations. But thus it appeareth how strong* self-interest *is in the world; and how charitable men are to those of their own opinions or parties, and how easily many do take liberty to speak their pleasure against any that are not of their mind.*

8. *Observe also how* forward men are to Teach, and how backward

backward to be Learners, *and then judge of their* Self-denyal. *Why are so many unwilling to enter by the way of Ordination? but (too commonly) because they judge better of their* Own *abilities then* Ordainers *do; and therefore suspect that they may be rejected by the* Ordainers, *or disgraced at the least, while they think highly of themselves. But if they were* self-denying *men, they would think the sober, faithful Pastors, much fitter Judges of their abilities then themselves, and would not run before they are sent. Many that reproach the Ministers as deceivers, will needs be themselves the Teachers of the people: As if they should say,* [We (silly ignorant souls) are wiser and fitter to be Teachers then you: come down and let us take your places.] *In conference you may observe that most are forwarder to* speak *then to* hear: *which shews that they overvalue their own understandings. And so much are Proud men delighted to be thought the Oracles of the world, that if you will but seem to hearken to them, and learn of them, and yield to their opinions, you win their hearts, and shall be the men that have their commendations. In so much that some late ambitious persons, that have thought to rise by the art of dissimulation, have found that there is no way for the deceiving of the people, and procuring the good will of most, like this; even to seem to be of every mans opinion that they talk with, and to make every sect and party believe that they are their friends, and of their mind: Especially, if you will seem to be changed by their arguments, and give them the glory of your convictions and illumination, you will then be the dearly beloved of their hearts. In all this you may see the rarity of* self-denyal: *Yea in the very work of God, too many of the most zealous godly Ministers, that have been the instruments of converting many souls, are toucht a little with the temptation to this* selfishness, *looking too much to their* own *part in the work.*

9. *Observe but how commonly with men called Christians, the* Interest of Christ is trodden in the dirt, when it seemeth to cross any interest of their own. *An Argument drawn from the commands of God, or the necessity of the Church, or of the souls of men, seems nothing to them, if their Honour, or Gain, or Greatness, or safety, do stand up against it, and be inconsistent with its conclusion. Hence it is that the souls of Hypocrites do cheat*

them

themselves by a Carnal Religiousnes, serving God only in subserviency to their selves. Hence it is that Hypocrites do most shew themselves in matters of self-interest: *In the cheap part of Religion, they seem to be as good as any: as zealous for their party and opinions, (which they call the Truth) and as long and lowd in prayer, and for as strict a way of discipline with others: But touch them in their estates or names: Call them to costly works of Charity, or to let go their right for peace, or publick good, or to confess and lament any sin that they commit, and you shall then see that they are but common men: and* Self *bears rule instead of Christ. Hence also it is, that so many persons can bear with themselves in any calling or trade of life that is but gainful, be it never so unjust, and will not believe but it is lawful, because it is profitable; for they* suppose *that* gain is godliness, 1 Tim. 6. 5. *Hence it is that so many families will be so far Religious as will stand with their commodity; but no further: Yea that so many Ministers have the wit to prove that most Duties are to them no Duties, when they will cost them much labour or dishonour in the world, or bring them under sufferings for men: And hence it is that so many carnal Politicians do in their Laws and Counsels alwaies prefer the interest of their bodies before Gods interest, and mens souls: Yea some are so far forsaken by common reason, and void of the Love of God and his Church, as to maintain that Magistrates in their Laws and Judgements must let matters of Religion alone; as if that* Self, *even* Carnal Self, *were all their Interest, and all their God: and as if they were of the Prophane Opinion* [Every man for himself, and God for us all] *or as if they would look to their* own cause, *and bid God look to* his.

From the Power of this selfishness *it is that so many Princes and States turn persecutors, and stick not to silence, banish (and some of the bloodyer sort, to kill) the Ministers of Christ, when they do but think that they stand cross to their carnal interests: And if you will plead the Interest of Christ and souls against theirs, and tell them, that the banishment, imprisonment, silencing or death of such or such a servant of the Lord, will be injurious to many souls, and therefore if they were guilty of death in some cases, they should reprieve them, as they do women with child, till Christ*

Christ be formed in the precious souls that they travail in birth with (so their Lives be not more hurtful by any contrary mischief, which death only can restrain, which is not to be supposed of sober men) yet all this seems nothing to a selfish *Persecutor, that regards not Christs interest in comparison of his own.* Self *is the great Tyrant and Persecutor of the Church.*

10. *Observe also how few they be that* satisfie their souls in Gods Approbation, though they are mis-judged and vilified by the world *: and how few that rejoyce at the prosperity of the Gospel, though themselves be in Adversity : most men must needs have the Hypocrites reward,* Matth. 6. 2. *even some commendation from men : and too few are fully pleased with his eye that seeth in secret, and will reward them openly,* Matth. 6. 4, 6. *And hence it is that injurious censures and hard words do go so near them, and they make so great a matter of them. Those times do seem* best *to* selfish *men, which are most for them : If* they *prosper, and their party prosper, though most of the Church should be a loser by it, they will think that it is a blessed time : But if the Church prosper, and not they, but any suffering befall them, they take on as if the Church did stand or fall with* them. Self-interest *is their measure, by which they judge of times and things.*

11. *Observe also how* eagerly men are set to have their Own wills take place in publick businesses, and to have their own opinions to be the Rule for Church and Common-wealth : *and then judge by this of their* self-denyal. *Were not* self *predominant, there would not be such striving who should Rule, and whose will should be the Law : but men would think that others were as likely to Rule with Prudence and Honesty as they. How eager is the Papist to have his way by an Universal Monarch ? How eager are others for* one *Ecclesiastical National Head ? How eager are the Popular party for their way ? and the Monarchical for theirs ? as if the welfare of all did lie in their several modes of Government. And so confidently do the Libertines speak for theirs, that they begin now to make motions that our* Parliament-men *shall be hanged or beheaded as Traytors, if any should make a motion in (a free) Parliament, against the General Liberty which they desire. Wonderful ! that men should*

ever grow to such an overweening of themselves, and overvaluing their own understandings, as to obtrude so palpable and odious a wickedness upon Parliaments so confidently, and to take them for Traytors that will not be Traytors, or grosly disobedient against the Lord? Self-denyal *would cure these peremptory demands, and teach men to be more suspicious of their own understandings.*

12. *Lastly, Observe but* how difficult a thing it is, to keep Peace (as in families and neighbourhoods) so in Churches and Common-wealths; *and judge by this of mens* self-denyal. *Husbands and wives, brothers and sisters, masters and servants, live at variance, and all through the conflicts that arise between their contrary* self-interests. *If a beast do but trespass on a neighbours grounds; if they be but assessed for the State, or poor above their expectations; if in any way of trading their commodity be crost; you shall quickly see where* self *bears Rule. This makes it so difficult a work to keep the Churches from Divisions. Few men are sensible of the* Universal *Interest, because they are captivated to their* own *: And therefore it is that men* fear not *to make parties and divisions in the Church: and will tear it in pieces to satisfie their* interest *or* selfish *zeal: Hence it is that Parties are so much multiplyed, and keep up the buckler against others, because that* selfishness *makes all* Partial. *Hence it is that people fall off from their Pastors, or else fall out with them, when they are crost in their opinions, reproved for their sins, or called to confess or make restitution; and perhaps that they may sacrilegiously defraud the Church of Tythes or other payments that are due. Hence it is also that members so oft fall out with one another, for foul words, or differences of judgement, or some point or other of* self-interest: *Nay sometimes about their very seats in the place of Worship; while every man is for* himself, *the Ministers can hardly keep them in Charity and Peace.*

And is any of this agreeable to our holy Rule and Pattern? No man can think so that hath read the Gospel, but he that is so blinded by selfishness *as not to understand what makes against it. And here, besides what is largelyer spoken after, let me tell of a few of the evils of this sin, and the contrary benefits of* self-denyal.

1. *The*

1. *The Power of* selfishness *keeps men strangers to themselves: They know not their Original nor Actual sins, with any kindly humbling knowledge. The very nature of Original sin doth consist in these two things:* Privatively, *in the want of our Original Love or Propensity to God as God: I mean, the Privation of the Root, or Habit, or Inclination, to Love God for himself, as the Beginning and End of us and all things, and the absolute Lord, and Infinite, simple, inestimable Good. And* Positively, *in the inordinate Propensity or* Inclination *to* our selves *as for* our selves, *and not as duly subordinate to God: The soul having unfaithfully and rebelliously withdrawn it self from God, in point of Love and subjection, it become its own Idol, and looks no higher then it self, and Loveth God and all things but for it self (and principally for its carnal pleasure:) And the Propensity to this, with the Privation of the souls Inclination to God, is Original sin; the Disposition suited to the actual sin that caused it, which was a* retiring *from* God *to* self. *He that feeleth not this evil in himself, hath no true knowledge of Original sin. And its the want of the sense of this great evil, (and so the want of being acquainted with their hearts) that causeth so many to turn Pelagians, and to deny the being of Original sin.*

2. *Both* selfishness, *and the want of a true discerning of it, doth breed and feed abundance of errours, and teach men to corrupt the whole body of Practical Divinity, and to subvert many Articles of faith, which stand in their way. How comes the world to be all in a flame about the Universal Reign of the Pope of* Rome, *but from the dominion of* selfishness? *Whence is it that the Nations of the earth have been so troubled for Patriarchs, Metropolitanes, and Dioceſans that must do their work by others, and for many things that (at best) can pretend to be but humane, indifferent, changeable forms, but from the prevalency of* Self? *Whence is it that mens consciences have been ensnared, and the Churches troubled, by so many Ceremonies of mens invention, and the Church must rather lose her faithfullest Pastors, then they be permitted to worship God as* Peter *and* Paul *did? Hath not* selfishness *and* Pride *done this? It is* self *that hath taught some to plead too much for their own sufficiency, and to deny the need of special Grace. And so far hath it prevailed with some of late, as to lead*

them Doctrinally to deny, that God is the Ultimate End of man, and to be Loved for himself, and above our selves and all things; but only (they say) he is our finis cujus vel rei *to be loved* amore concupiscentiæ: *In a word, it is this woful principle that hath corrupted Doctrine, Discipline and Worship, in so many of the Churches.*

3. *We shall never have Peace in Church or Common-wealth, while* selfishness *bears sway. Every mans Interest will be preferred before the publick Interest, and rise against it as oft (which will be oft) as they seem inconsistent. This is the* Vice *that informeth* Tyrannie; *whether it be* Monarchie, Aristocracie, *or* Democracie, *it is corrupted into Tyrannie when* selfish Interest *is preferred before the Common Interest. This makes our people think themselves too wise or too good to learn, or to be guided by their Pastors, and every man (of this strain) seems wise enough to lead off a party of the Church into a mutiny against the Pastors and the rest. This makes the labours of Reconcilers unsuccessful, while* selfishness *engageth so many wits, and tongues, and pens, and parties, against the most necessary equal terms, and endeavours of such as would Reconcile. Were it not for these* selfish *men, how soon would all our rents be healed? how soon would all our wars be ended? and all our heart-burnings and malicious oppositions be turned into charitable consultations for an holy peace? If once men were carryed above themselves, they would meet in* God *the Center of* Unity.

4. *It is for want of* self-denyal *that we undergo so many disappointments, and suffer so much disquietment and vexation. Were our wills more entirely subjected to the will of God, so that* his will *were preferred before our own, we should* Rest *in his will, and have no contradictory desires* to be *disappointed, and no matter left for self-vexation. Had we no disease, we should feel no pain: and it is our* self-will *rebelling against the will of God that is our disease.* Self-denyal *removeth all the venome from our hearts: Persecution, and poverty, and sickness may touch our flesh, but the heart is fortified so far as we have this Grace. O how happily doth it quiet and calm the mind, when things befall us that* would *even distract a* selfish *man! O happy soul, where God is* All, *and* Self *is* Nothing! *There Duty, and Love, and*

Joy

joy are all, *and* trouble *and* distress *is nothing*; *These are not our matters now*; *Partly because we are above them, and partly because they belong not to our care, but to his Providence. Let us do our Duty and adhere to him, and let him dispose of us as he sees meet. Who would much fear a Tyrant or any other enemy, that saw God and Glory, which faith can see? Did we see the glorious Throne of Christ, we should be so far from trembling at the bar of Persecutors, that we should scarce so much regard them as to answer them; the infinite Glory would so potently divert our minds. As we scarce hearken to our childrens impertinent babblings, When we are taken up with great affairs; so if a Tyrant talk to us of hanging or imprisonment, we should scarce hearken to such trivial impertinencies, were We so far above our selves, as Faith and Love should advance the soul.*

I have further shewed you in the following Treatise, how self-denyal *disableth all Temptations*; *how it conduceth to all eminent works of Charity, but especially to the secret works of the sincere: It is of absolute necessity to salvation: It is the thing that hypocrites are condemned for Want of: It is the wisdom of the soul, as being the only way to our own security: And it is the holiness and justice of the soul (as it is conjunct with the Love of God) in that it restoreth to God his own: The excellency of Grace is manifested in* self-denyal. *To do or suffer such little things as* self *is not much against, is nothing: But to be* Nothing *in our selves, and God to be our All, and to close with our first and blessed End, this is the nature of Sanctification.*

Alas, poor England, *(and more then* England, *even all the Christian world) into What confusion and misery hath* selfishness *plunged thee! Into how many pieces art thou broken, because that every hypocrite hath a* self *to be his principle and end, and forsakes the true Universal End! How vain are our words to Rulers, to Souldiers, to Rich and Poor, While we call upon them to* Deny themselves *! And must We lose our labour? and must the Nation lose its peace and hopes? Is there no remedy, but* selfishness *must undo all? If so, be it known to you, the principal loss shall be your own; and in seeking your safety, liberty, Wealth and glory, you shall lose them all, and fall into misery, slavery and disdain. Deny* your selves, *or* save your selves *if you can.*

God is not engaged to take care of you, or preserve you, if you will be your own, and will be reserving or saving your selves from him. And though you may seem to prosper in self-seeking *waies, they will end, yea shortly end, in your confusion. You have seen of late years in this Land, the Glory of Self-seekers turned to shame. But its greater* shame *thats out of sight. The word and works of God have warned you. If yet the Cause and Church of God shall be neglected, and your* selves *and your* own *affairs preferred, and men that shall not be tolerated to abuse you, shall be Tolerated to abuse the souls of men, and the Lord that made them; and if God must be denyed, because you will not deny your selves, you shall be* denyed *by Christ, in your great extremity, when the remembrance of these things shall be your torment. Hearken and Amend; or prepare your answer: for behold the Judge is at the door.*

THE

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PAge 47. line 33. for *nor*, read *not*: p. 59. l. 34. r. *watch*: p. 77. l. 8. r. *what you hold*: p. 79. l. 2. r *men are*: p. 120. l. 30. r. *a man*: p. 142. l. 28. r. *waies*: p 148. l. 1, 2. r. *advantage*; & l. 21. for *selves* r. *flesh*: p. 164. l. 29. r. *News*: p. 165. l. *ult*. r. *ranging*: p. 182. l. 22. for *the* r. *that*: p. 230. l. 29. r. *is it any*: p. 232. l. 9. r. *lowest place*: p. 236. l. 17. r. *bar of Christ*: l. 22. for *Not* r. *Nor*: p. 237. l. 15. for *to* r. *so*: p. 238. l. 30. r. *them than their*: p. 241. l. 6. r. *them for*: p. 242. l. 28. blot out *so*: p. 245. l. 15. for *He* r. *God*: p. 248. l. 26. r. *not to be*: p. 260. l. 12. r. *might*: l. 28. r. *am I*: p. 273. l. 11. r. *our own*: p. 285. l. 10. r. *Head of*: p. 294. l. 34. for *make* r. *may*: p. 296. l. 26. r. *there were no*: p. 297. l. 19. blot out *the*: p. 298. l. 18. blot out the first *you*: p. 371. l. 12. blot out *it*: p. 318. l. 16. blot out *to*: p. 323. l. 19. for *you* r. *your*: p. 326. l. 16. for *do* r. *to*: p. 328. l. 11. r. *of our*: p. 329. l. 10. r. *warm in*: l. 14. r. *that causeth*: p. 331. l. 19. for *most* r. *must*: p. 336. l. 18. for *these* r. *those*.

LUKE

LUKE 9. 23, 24.

And he said to them all, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his Cross daily and follow me: For whosoever will save his life shall lose it: but whosoever will lose his life for my sake, the same shall save it.

CHAP. I.

What Selfishness and Self-denyal are; at the Root.

I HAVE already spoken of Conversion in the foregoing Discourse, both opening to you the true nature of it, and the reasons of its necessity, and perswading men thereunto. But lest so great a work should miscarry with any for want of a more particular explication, I should next open the three great parts of the work distinctly and in order: that is, 1. *From what* it is that we must Turn: 2. *To whom* we must Turn: 3. And *By whom* we must Turn. For though I touched all these in the foregoing Directions, and through the discourse; yet I am afraid lest so brief a touch should be uneffectual.

The first of these I shall handle at this time from this Text,

 medling

medling with no more but what is necessary to our present business.

You may easily perceive that the Doctrine which Christ here proclaimeth to all that have thoughts of being his followers, is this, that [*All that will be Christians, must Deny themselves, and take up their Cross, and follow Christ, and not reserve so much as their very lives, but resolve to resign up all for him.*]

Self-denyall is one part of true Conversion: For the opening of this I must shew you; 1. What is meant by *Self*; and 2. What by *Denying* this *Self*: and 3. The Grounds and Reasons of the point: and 4. I shall briefly apply it.

I. *Self*, is sometime taken for the very person, consisting of soul and body simply considered: and this is called Natural or Personal *Self*. 2. *Self* is taken for this Person considered in its capacity of earthly comforts, and in relation to the present blessings of this world that tend to the prosperity of man as in the flesh: And this may be called *Earthly Self* (yet in an innocent sense.) 3. *Self* is taken for the Person as corrupted by inordinate sinfull sensuality; which may be called *Carnal Self*. 4. *Self* may be taken for the Person in his sanctified estate; which is *Spiritual Self*. 5. And *Self* may be taken for the person in his Naturals and Spirituals Conjunct, as he is *capable of a Life of Everlasting Felicity*; which is the *Immortal* Self.

II. By *Denying* Self, is meant disclaiming, renouncing, disowning, and forsaking it. *Self* is here lookt on partly as *a party disjunct from Christ, and withdrawn from its due subordination to God*, and partly as *his Competitor and opposite*: and accordingly it is to be denyed, partly by *a neglect*, and partly by *an opposition*.

Before I come to tell you how far *self* must be denyed, I must tell you wherein the disease of *Selfishness* doth consist; and for brevity we shall dispatch them both together.

And on the Negative, 1. To be a natural Individual person distinct from God our Creator, is none of our disease; but the state which we were created in. And therefore no man must under pretence of self-denyal either destroy himself, or yet with some Hereticks aspire to be essentially and personally one with God, so that their individual personality should be drowned in him as a drop is in the Ocean.

2. The

2. The disease of *selfishness* lyeth not in having a Body that is capable of tasting sweetness in the creature, or in having the Objects of our sence in which we be delighted, nor yet in all actual sweetness and delight in them; nor in a simple love of life it self: For all these are the effects of the Creators Will. And therefore this *self-denyal* doth not consist in a hatred or disregard of our own lives; or in a destruction of our appetites or senses, or an absolute refusal to please them in the use of the creatures, which God hath given us.

3. Yea though our Natures are corrupted by sin, *self-denyal* requireth not that we should kill our selves, and destroy our humane natures that we may thereby destroy the sin. Self-murder is a most hainous sin, which God condemneth.

4. Our spiritual *self*, or *self* as sanctified must not be so denyed, as to deny our selves to be what we are, or have what we have, or do what we do: we may not deny Gods Graces; nor deny that they are in us as the subject, nor may we restrain the holy desires which God exciteth in us; or deny to fulfill them, or bring them towards fruition, when opportunity is offered us.

5. We may not deny to accept of any mercy which God shall offer us, though but a common creature: nor to use any talent for his service if he choose us for his stewards; much less may we refuse any spiritual mercy, that may further our Salvation: It is not the *self-denyal* required by Christ, that we deny to be Christians, or to be sanctified by the spirit, or to be delivered from our sins and enemies; or that we deny to use the means and helps that are offered us, or to accept of the priviledges purchased by Christ: Much less to deny our salvation it self, and to undo our own souls. In a word, it is not any thing that is really and finally to our hurt or loss.

But (as to the Affirmative) I shall shew you what the disease of *selfishness* indeed is, and so what *self denyal* is. 1. When God had created man in his own Image, he gave him a holy *disposition* of soul, which might *incline* him to his *Maker* as his *only Felicity and Ultimate End:* He made him to be blessed in the sight of his Glory, and in the everlasting Love of God, and delight in him, and praises of him. This excellent employment and glory did God both fit him for, and set before him.

But the first temptation did entice him to adhere to an inferiour good, for the pleasing of his *flesh*, and the advancement of *himself* to a carnal kind of felicity in *himself*, that he might be as God in knowing good and evil. And thus man was suddenly taken with the creature as a means to the pleasing of his *carnal self*, and so did depart from God his true felicity; and retired into *himself* in his estimation, affection, and intention; and delivered up his Reason in subjection to his sensuality, and made *himself* his Ultimate End.

With this sinfull *inclination* are we all born into the world; so that every man according to his corrupted nature doth terminate all his desires in *himself*: and what ever he may *notionally* be convinced of to the contrary, yet *practically* he makes his earthly life and the advancement and pleasure which he expecteth therein, to be his felicity and end.

Self-denyal now is the cure of this: It carryeth a man from *himself* again, and sheweth him that he was never made to be his own felicity or end; and that the flesh was not made to be pleased before God; and that it is so poor, and low, and short a felicity, as indeed is but a name and shadow of felicity, and when it pretends to that, a meer deceit. It sheweth him how unreasonable, how impious and unjust it is, that a creature and such a creature, should terminate his desires and intentions in *himself*: And this is the principal part of self-denyal.

2. As God was mans *ultimate End* in his state of innocency, so accordingly man was appointed to *use all creatures in order to God*, for *his* Pleasure and Glory. So that it was the work of man to do his Makers wil, & he was to use nothing but with this intention.

But when man was faln from God to *himself*, he afterwards used all things for himself, even his carnal self; and all that he possessed was become the provision and fuel of his lusts; and so the whole creation which he was capable of using, was abused by him to this low and *selfish end*, as if all things had been made but for his delight and will.

But when man is brought to *Deny himself*, he is brought to *restore the Creatures* to their *former use*, and not to sacrifice them to his fleshly mind; so that all that he hath and useth in the world, is used to another end (so far as he denyeth himself) then

then formerly it was; even for God and not himself.

3. In the state of Innocency, though man had naturally an averseness from death and bodily pains, as being natural evils, and had a desire of the welfare even of the flesh it self; yet as his body was subject to his soul, and his senses to his Reason, so his bodily ease and welfare was to be esteemed and desired and sought, but in a due subordination to his spiritual wellfare, and especially to his Makers Will. So that though he was to value his Life, yet he was much more to value his everlasting life, and the pleasure and Glory of his Lord.

But now when man is faln from God to *Himself*, his Life and earthly felicity is the sweetest and the dearest thing to him that is. So that he preferreth it before the Pleasing of God and everlasting life: And therefore he seeketh it more, and holdeth it faster as long as he can, and parteth with it more unwillingly. As *Innocent Nature* had an *appetite* to the objects of sense; but *corrupted nature* hath an *enraged*, *greedy*, *rebellious* and *inordinate* appetite to them: so *Innocent nature* had a *love* to this natural earthly life and the comforts of it: but *corrupted Nature* hath such an *inordinate love* to them, as that all thing else are made but subordinate to them, and swallowed up in this gulf: even God himself is so far loved as he befriendeth these our carnal ends, and furthereth our earthly prosperity and life.

But when men are brought to *Deny themselves*, they are in their measures restored to their first esteem of Life and all the prosperity and earthly comforts of life. Now they have learned so to love them as to love God better; and so to value them as to prefer everlasting life before them; and so to hold them and seek their preservation as to resign them to the will of God, and to lay them down when we cannot hold them with his Love, and to choose death in order to life everlasting, before that life which would deprive us of it. And this is the principal instance of *self-denyal* which Christ giveth us here in the Text, as it is recited is by all the three Evangelists that recite these words. [*He that saveth his life shall lose it*, &c. *And what shall it profit a man to win all the world and lose his soul?*] By these instances it appears, that by *self-denyal* Christ doth mean a setting so light by all the world, and by our own lives, and

consequently, our carnal Content in these, as to be willing and Resolved to part with them all, rather then with him and everlasting life: even as *Abraham* was bound to love his son *Isaac*, but yet so to prefer the Love and Will of God, as to be able to sacrifice his son at Gods Command.

And the Lord Jesus himself was the livelyest Pattern to us of this Self-denial that ever the world saw: Indeed his whole life was a continued practice of it. And it hath oft convinced me that it is a special part of our Sanctification, when I have considered how abundantly the Lord hath exercised himself in it for our example. For as it is desperate to think with the *Socinians* that he did it *only* for our Example; so it is also a desperate Error of others, to think that it was only for satisfaction to God, and not at all for our Example. Many do give up themselves to *Flesh-pleasing*, upon a misconceit that Christ did therefore deny his flesh, to purchase them a liberty to please *theirs*. As in his Fasting and Temptations, and his sufferings by the reproach and ingratitude of men, and the outward Poverty and Meanness of his condition, the Lord was pleased to deny himself; so especially in his last Passion and death. As I have shewed elsewhere, he loved his natural life and peace: and therefore in manifestation of that, he prayeth, *Father, if it be thy Will, let this Cup pass from me*: But yet when it came to the comparative practical Act, he proceeded to choose his Fathers Will with death, rather then life without it, and therefore saith, [*Not my Will* (that is, my simple love of life) *but thy Will be done.*] In which very words he manifesteth *another will* of his own, besides that, which he consenteth shall not be done, and sheweth that he prefered the pleasing of his Father in the Redemption of the world, before his own life. And thus in their measure he causeth all his Members to do: so that life, and all the comforts of life, are not so dear to them as the love of God and everlasting life.

4. When God had created man, he was presently the *Owner* of him, and man understood this that he was *God's*, and not *his own*. And he was not to claim a *Propriety in himself*, nor to be affected to himself as his *own*, nor to live as his *own*, but as *His* that made him.

But

But when he fell from God, he arrogated practically (though notionally he may deny it) a propriety in himself, and useth himself accordingly.

And when Christ bringeth men to deny themselves, they cease to be their *own* in their conceits any more: Then they resign themselves wholly to God as being wholly his. They know they are his, both by the right of Creation and of Redemption: And therefore are to be disposed of by him, *and to glorifie him in body and spirit which are his*, 1 Cor.6.19,20. Rom.14.9. To be thus heartily devoted to God as his own, is the form of Sanctification; and to live as *God's* own, is the truly Holy life.

5. As man in Innocency did know that he was not his *own*; so he knew that *nothing that he had was his own*; but that he was the Steward of his Creator, for whom he was to use them, and to whom he was accountable,

But when he was fallen from God to himself, though he had lost the *Right of a Servant*, yet he graspeth at the Creature, as if he had the *Right of a Lord*: He now takes his Goods, his Lands, his Money to be his *own*: and therefore he thinks he may use them for himself, and give God only some small Contribution, lest he should disturb his Possession: he saith as the impious ones, *Psal.*12.4. *Our lips are our own; who is Lord over us?*] Though all of them know speculatively that all is Gods, yet practically they take it and use it as their own.

But when Grace teacheth them to deny themselves, it strippeth them naked of all that they seemed Proprietors of; and maketh them confess that nothing is their *own*, but all is *Gods*; and to God they do devote it, and use it for him, and give him his own: which the first Christians signified by selling all, and laying at the Apostles feet. And therefore he asketh God what he shall do with it, and how he shall use it; and if God take it from him, he can bless the name of the Lord with *Job*, *Job* 1.21. as knowing he taketh but his *own*: and can say with *Eli*, *It is the Lord, let him do what seemeth him good*, 1.Sam.3.18, He knows that God may *do with his own as he list*. Mat.20.15. and that he can have nothing but of *his* bounty; and therefore that it is his Mercy that leaveth him any thing; but it were no wrong to him if he took away all. And thus he understandeth that he is but a

Steward,

Steward, and therefore must use all that he hath for him that he received it from. If he have Children, his desire is to know which way they may be most serviceable to God: and to that he will devote them. If he have Wealth, or Honor, and Power among men, his care is to know which way he may employ them for his Masters use, and so he will imploy them. If he have Wit and Learning, his care is to serve God by it. If he have strength and time, he is thinking which way to improve them for his Lord. And if vain Companions, or the World, or fleshly Delights would draw him to lay them out for them, he remembers that this were to waste his Masters stock upon his enemies. So that though the sanctified man hath all things, yet he knows that he hath nothing. All things are his as Gods Steward: but nothing is properly and ultimately his *own*. All things are *his* for God; but nothing is *his* for his Carnal-self, nor ultimately for his personal or natural self. Upon this ground he gives the Devil, the World, and the Flesh a Denyal, when they would have his Time, his Tongue, his Wit, his Wealth, or any thing that he possesseth: he telleth them [*They are none of mine, but God's: I received them, and I must be accountable for them. I had them not from you, and therefore I may not use them for you: I must give to God the things that are God's: that which is yours I will readily yield you. Justice requireth that every one have his own.*] And thus *Self-denial* doth take off the sanctified from giving that which is God's unto themselves.

Object. *But do we not lawfully use his Mercies for our selves? Is not our Meat, and Drink, and Cloaths, and Houses, and Goods our own, and may we not use them for our selves?*

Answ. Improperly they are our *own*: so far our *own*, as that our Fellow servants may not take them from us without our Lords consent: as every servant may have a peculiar stock entrusted in his hands, or may have his tools to do his work with, which indeed are his Masters; but are *his to use*. But as to a strict *Propriety* they are none of ours, but God is the only Proprietary of the world.

And for the use of them, it may be for our selves in subordination to God, but never ultimately for our selves. We may not use one Creature, but ultimately and principally for God.

When

When we eat or drink, we must never make the pleasing of our Appetite our end, but must do it to strengthen, and chear, and fit our selves for the service of God; and therefore we must first ask God, and not our Appetite, what, and how much we must eat and drink: And we must no further please our Appetite, then the pleasing of it doth fit us for the service of God. It is the expres Command, 1 *Cor.*10.31. [*Whether ye eat or drink, or what ever ye do, do all to the Glory of God.*] You may not wear your Cloaths meerly and ultimately for your bodies, but only to fit your bodies for Gods service: and therefore you must advise with his Word, and with your end, what you should put on. You may not provide a house to dwell in, nor Friends, nor Riches, nor any thing else for the pleasing of your flesh, as your ultimate end, but for the service of your Lord. For you must *put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh to fulfill the lusts thereof*, Rom. 13.14.

6. As man had his Being and well-being from God, so is it God only that can *preserve* and *continue them*. Innocent man understood this, and therefore lived in a *Dependance* upon God; looking to his hand for the supply of his wants, and casting all his care upon him, and trusting him wholly with himself, and all, and not distracting his own mind with cares and distrustful fears, but quieted and contented his mind in the Wisdom, Goodness, and All-sufficiency of God.

But when man was fallen to himself from God, he desired presently to have his portion or stock in his *own* hands, and grew distrustful of God, and began to look upon himself as his *own preserver*; (in a great measure) and therefore he fell to carking and caring for himself, and to studious contrivances for his own preservation and supplies. He searched every Creature for himself, and laboured to find in it some good for himself; as if the care of himself had been wholly divolved on himself. I have been as much troubled to understand that Text in *Gen.* 3.22. as any one almost in the Bible, being somewhat unsatisfied with some ordinary expositions; and yet it is too hard for me. But this seems to me the most probable Interpretation; that in his estate of innocency *Adam* was as a Child in his Fathers house, that was only to study to please his Father, and to do the work that he commanded him, but not to take any thought or care for himself;

And the L God said, Behold the man is become as one of us, &c.

for while he was obedient, it was his Fathers part to preserve him and provide for him, to keep off death and danger, and supply all his wants. And therefore though man had the *faculty or power of knowing* more perfect then we have now, yet he did not need to trouble himself about these matters of *Self*, because they belonged to God: and consequently had not the *actual consideration of knowledge* of them: for that would have been but a vain and troublesome knowledge and consideration to him: For though the knowledge of all things *Necessary* to be known, was part of his perfection, yet the *actual knowledge* of many things *unnecessary* and vexatious or tempting, may be part of a mans infelicity and misery. And so *he that increaseth knowledge increaseth sorrow*, *Eccl.* 1.18. As man that foreknoweth his own death, is through the fear of it all his life time subject to bondage, *Heb.* 2.15. and the fear is more grievous then the death it self; when a beast that knoweth not his death is freed from those fears. Indeed in our faln estate there is some use for more of this kind of knowledge then before; But in innocency man needed only to know his maker, and his will and works, and the creature as his utensils, and the glass in which he was to be seen, and to fear with moderation the death which he had threatned, meerly *as threatned by him*. But by the temptation of Satan, man grew desirous to be past a child, at his Fathers finding, and under his care, and would take care and thought for himself and know what *was good or evil for himself* as to the natural man: and so far turned his eye to the creature to study it *for himself*, when he should have studied God in it: and to search after *good and evil to himself* in it, which he should have searched after the attributes of God in it, and daily gazed with holy love and admiration upon his blessed face that shined in this glass: and so he would *use* the creature directly for *himself*, which he should have *used* only for *Gods service*. And thus I conceive man did indeed by his fall attain to much more *actual knowledge* as to the number of objects then he had before: which knowledge was indeed in it self considered Physically good, but not Good to him as any part of his felicity, or his vertue, but rather by participatiou his sin and misery, as being unsuitable to his condition. It was better with him when we he know *One God*, and

and all things in God as they conduced to the Love and Service of God, and were suitable to his state, then when he turned his mind from God, and fell to study the creature in it self, and for himself, as Good or Evil to himself, and so lost himself and his understanding in a crowd of unnecessary and misused objects: Like a foolish Patient that having a most judicious and faithfull Physitian that will take care of his health, and provide him the best and safest remedies, doth grow to an eager desire to be acquainted *himself* with the nature of each medicine and to be skilfull in the cure of his own disease, that he may trust his Physitian no longer, but may be his own Physitian: and therfore hearkneth to a seducer that tells him [*The Physitian doth but keep thee in ignorance, lest thou shouldst be as wise as he, and able to cure or preserve thy self: hearken to me, and I will teach thee to know all these things thy self, and so thou maist take care of thy self.*] So man was seduced by Satan to withdraw himself from the fatherly care of God, by a desire *himself* to be wise for *himself* in the knowledge of *all that* in the creature which might be directly *good or evil to himself*, so taking on *himself* the work of God, and casting off the work that God had set him, and withdrawing himself from his necessary dependence on his Maker. And accordingly much of this *selfish knowledge* of the creature he did attain: but with the wofull loss of the Divine knowledge of the creature, and of the filial soul-contenting knowledge of God: yea and of himself, as in his due subordination to God. This seems the sence of this text, and this is the case of faln mankind. See more of this below pag. 286. out of Damascene.

Naturally now every man would fain have his safety and Comforts in his own hand. He thinks them not so sure and well in the hand of God: O what would a carnal man give that he had but his *life* and *health* in his *own* hand, and might keep them as long as *he* saw good! When he is poor, he had rather it were in *his* hand to supply his wants, then in *Gods*; for he thinks it would go better with him. When he is sick, he had far rather it were in his *own* hand to cure him, then in Gods, for then he should be sure of it. If he be in any strait, he cannot be content with a bare promise for his deliverance; but unless he see some probability in the means, and work, and unless he be ac-

quainted with the particular way by which he must be delivered he is not satisfied: for he cannot trust God, so well as himself. Is not this the case of all you that are carnal? Would you not think your case much safer and better if it were in your own hands, then you do now it is in Gods! What would you not give, that you were but as able to give ease, and health and wealth, and honour, and life to your selves, as God is! Hence it is that you so anxiously contrive for your selves, and trouble your selves with neeedless cares; because you dare not trust God, but think you are faln to your own care and finding. You think your selves quite undone when you have nothing left you but God and his Promise to trust upon, and when you see nothing in your selves and the creature to support you. And thus are all men *faln from God to themselves.*

But Sanctification teacheth men that *self-denyal* which according to its measure, doth heal them of this disease. Though some actual knowledge of good and evil, and some care of our natural *selves* be now become a necessary duty, as suited to our lapsed state, which yet had never *been* but through sin: Yet that which is *sinful*, self-denyal doth destroy. It sheweth man that he is every way insufficient for himself, and that he is not the fountain of his own felicity: nor doth it belong to him, but to God, to preserve him and secure his welfare. He seeth what a folly it is to depart from the tuition of his Heavenly Father, and as the Prodigal Son to desire to have his portion in his own hands. Experience tels him with smart and sorrow that he hath not been so good a preserver of himself, nor used himself so well as to desire to be in the same hands any longer that have so abused him: Yea he knoweth that it was God that indeed preserved him, while he was over Solicitous about it himself, and would needs have the managing of his own affairs. He now believes that he can be nowhere safe but in the hands of God: and no way sufficiently provided for but by his wisdom, love and power: Nor dare he trust himself hereafter with himself or any creature: He finds that he hath but turmoiled and distracted his mind by undertaking the management of his own preservation: and that he hath brought himself into a wilderness, and lost himself and ravelled his own affairs.

Luke. 15. 12.

affairs: when if he had committed himself to God, and been satisfied in his Wisdom, Love, and Power, all had been kept safe and sound, and man had not been lost, nor his estate thus shattered and overthrown. And therefore the *returning self-denying* convert is brought to an utter *distrust* of *himself*, and resolved hereafter to trust himself upon nothing below Al-sufficiency and Infinite Love. He is so offended with himself for his former self-destruction, and for undoing himself so foolishly, that he calls himself to account and into judgement for it, and condemneth himself as a Traytor to God, and a Murderer of himself, and will no more be in the hands of so treacherous a delinquent: But as the eyes of a servant are on the hand of his Master, so are his eyes on God for all supplies. And this is the part of the work of the spirit of Adoption, who teacheth us to cry Abba, Father; and as Children, not to be very carefull for our selves, but to run to our Father in all our wants, and tell, him what we stand in need of and beg relief: and *to be carefull for nothing: but in every thing by prayer with supplication and thanksgiving to make known our requests to God*, *Phil.*4.6. And this acquiescence of the soul in the love of God, is it that *keepeth our hearts and minds in that Peace of God which passeth understanding*, *ver.* 7. so that the more self-denyal, the less is a man *dependant on himself*, or troubled with the cares of his own preservation: and the more doth he cast himself on God, and is carefull to please him that is his true Preserver, and then quieteth and resteth his mind in his Al-sufficiency and infinite wisdom and love; and so is a meer dependant upon God. Psal. 123. 2.

7. Moreover; It is the Prerogative of God as absolute Owner of us, to be the sole *Disposer* of *man* and of *all* the *other* creatures: and to choose them their condition, and give them their several Talents, and determine of the events of all their affairs, as pleaseth himself; And innocent man was contented with this order, and well pleased that God should be the absolute Disposer of him and all.

But when man turned from God to self, he presently desired to be the Disposer of himself; and not of *himself* only, but of all the creatures within his reach. How fain would *selfish* corrupted man be the chooser of his own condition? His will is against the

will of God, and he usually disliketh Gods disposal. If he had the matter in his own hands, almost nothing should be as it is; but so cross would they be to God that all things would be turned upside down: If it were at their will, there's scarce a poor man but would be Rich: and scarce a Rich man but would be richer: The Servant would be Master: The Tenant would be a Landlord: The Husbandman and Tradesman would be a Gentleman: the Labourer would live an easier life: His house should be better: his cloathing should be better; his fare should be better: his Provision should be greater, his credit or honour with men should be more; the Gentleman would be a Knight, and the Knight a Lord, and the Lord would be a King, and the King would be more Absolute and have a larger Dominion: Nay *every man* would be a King, and learn the doctrine of the Jews, and many of this age among us, to expect that the world should be ruled by them; and they should reign as Lords and Princes in the earth. If it were with *selfish* men as they would have it, there's scarce a man that would be what he is, nor dwell where he doth, nor live at the rates that now he liveth at. The weak would be alwayes strong; and the sick would be well and alwayes well; and the old would be young again, and never taste the infirmities of age; and if they might live as long as they would, I think there's few of the unsanctified that would ever die, nor look after heaven as long as they could live on earth. O what a brave life should I have, thinks the *selfish* unsanctified wretch, if I were but wholly at my own Disposal, and might be what I *would be*, and have what I *would* have! What would men give for such a life as this? Had they but their own *wills*, they would think themselves the happiest men on earth: that is, if they could be delivered from the will of God, and be from under his disposal, and get the reins into their own hands!

Nay this is not all, but the *selfish* person would be the disposer of all the world within his reach, as well as of himself. He would have Kingdoms at his *dispose*, and all things carryed according to his Will: He would have all his neighbours have a *dependance* upon him; Very bountiful he would be, if he were the Lord of all: For he would be the great Benefactor of the world, and have all men beholden to him, and depend upon

upon him. If he see things that little concern him, he hath a will of his own that would fain have the Disposal of them. If he hear of the affairs of other Nations, some will he hath of his own which he would have fulfilled in them, at least so far as any of his own interest may be involved in the business.

But when Sanctification hath brought men to *self-denyal*, then they discern and lament this folly: They see what silly giddy worms they are to be *Disposers* of themselves, or of the world: They see that they have neither wisdom, nor goodness, nor power sufficient for so great a work. They then perceive that it were better make an Ideot the Pilot of a Ship, or an Infant to be their Physitian when they are sick, or the Disposer of their estates, then to commit themselves and the world to their dispose. They see how foolishly they have endeavoured or desired to rob God of his prerogative: And therefore they return from themselves to him, and give up all by free consent to his sole Disposal, that so he may do with his own as he list. He finds that he hath work enough to do of his own, and is become too unfit for that: and therefore he dare no more undertake the work of God, for which he is infinitely unfit. He finds that the more he hath his *own will*, the worse it goes with him: and therefore he will give up himself to God and stand to *his will*: If he feels that Providence doth cross his flesh, and that he hath Poverty when the flesh would have riches, and shame when that carnal *self* would have honour, and labour when the flesh would have ease, and sickness when the flesh would have health, he would not for all that have the work taken out of the hand of God, but truly saith, *Not my will but thine be done*: and believeth that Gods disposal is the best; and that his Father knows well enough what he doth; And if it were put to his choice, whether God or he should be the Disposer of his estate and honour and Life, he had rather it were in Gods hands then his own: and would not undertake the charge, if it were offered him. Alas, thinks he, I am almost below a man and am I fit to make a God of? I come off so lamely in the duty of a creature as deserves damnation: and am I fit to arrogate the work of the Creator?

8. Moreover

8. Moreover it is the high Prerogative of God to be the *Soveraign Ruler* of the world; to make Laws for them, which muſt be obeyed; and to reward the obedient, and puniſh the diſobedient. God is King of all the earth; even King of Kings, and Lord of Lords; and all ſhall obey him, or be judged by him for their diſobedience.

But ſin turned man into a *Rebel* againſt Heaven, and a *Traytor* to his Maker: ſo that now the *ſelfiſh* unſanctified man *diſliketh* Gods Government, at leaſt in the particulars, and would Govern himſelf. The Law of God contained in his Word and Works he murmurs at as too obſcure, or too preciſe and ſtrict for him. He finds that it croſſeth his Carnal intereſt, and ſpeaks not good of him but evil, and therefore he is againſt it as ſuppoſing it to be againſt him and his pleaſure, profit, and honour in the world. If men had but the Government of themſelves, what a difference would there be between their way and Gods? If corrupt unſanctified ſelfiſh man might make a Law for himſelf in ſtead of the Word of God, what a Law would it be? and how much of the Law of God ſhould be repealed? If ſinners might make a Scripture, you ſhould find in it no ſuch paſſages as theſe, [*Except a man be Converted, or born again, he cannot enter into the Kingdom of heaven: without Holineſs none ſhall ſee God.*] If *ſelf* might make Laws, you ſhould not read in them [*If ye live after the fleſh ye ſhall die; but if by the Spirit ye mortifie the deeds of the body, ye ſhall live*] Nor ſhould you there find, that *the Gate is ſtrait, and the way is narrow that leads to life, and few there be that find it*; or that *the righteous are ſcarcely ſaved*] As all the Scripture is now for Holineſs, and againſt Prophaneſs, Ungodlineſs, and Senſuality; if *ſelf* had the framing of it, it ſhould all be changed, and it ſhould at leaſt ſpeak peace to fleſhly-minded men: All thoſe true and dreadful paſſages that ſpeak fire and brimſtone againſt the unſanctified, and threatned everlaſting torments, ſhould be raſed out; and you ſhall find no talk of *damnation* in the Scripture for ſuch as they: no talk of *the worm that never dyeth, or the fire that is never quenched*, or of [*Depart from me all ye workers of iniquity; I know you not*] or that [*the way of the ungodly ſhall periſh*] or that [*God doth laugh at them, becauſe he ſeeth that their*

their day is coming] Abundance of the Bible would be wiped out, if Carnal *self* had but the altering of it: Nay it would be quite made new, and made a contrary thing: the Articles of our Creed would be changed: the Petitions of our Rule for Prayer would be most altered: every one of the ten Commandements would be altered, as I shall after shew. Idolatry should be no sin, but the principal Law; for *self* would be set up as the Idol of the world: *will-worship* would be no sin; men would be held guiltless that take the name of God in vain: The Lords day should be a day of mirth and carnal pleasure: every Subject would be the Soveraign; and every Inferiour the Superior; Revenge would be made lawful for themselves, though not for others: Fornication and Adultery would be no mortal sin; Stealing would be made tolerable to themselves; it should be lawful to them to do any wrong to the name and reputation of another: in a word, every man would do what he list, and his will should be his Law, and himself should be his own Judge; a gentle tender Judge no doubt. Thus would *self* Rule.

But sanctification brings men to *Deny* this *self*; and to lay down the Arms of Rebellion against God; and to see how unfit we are to Rule our selves; that we are too foolish, and sinful, and partial to make Laws, and too partial also and tender to execute them; and that as we were made to obey, so obey we must; and come again into our ranks, and willingly subject our selves to the Soveraign of the world. Self-denyal teacheth a man to hate his own Carnal wisedom and reasonings that rise up against the Laws of God; and to Love them the worse because they are thus his own; and to love the Laws of God the better, because they are God's, and because they are against his *Carnal self*. The stamps of God on them doth make them currant with him, when if they had but the private stamps of *self*, he would disown them as counterfeit or treasonable. He hath indeed a flesh that is restrained by Gods Laws, and striveth against them; but he thinks never the worse of the Law for that, but approveth and liketh it in the inner man: and if he might have his choice, he would not blot out one Commandement, nor one Direction, nor one Article of Faith, nor a title of the Law, because that *self* is not the Chooser in him;

but he hath learned to submit to the will and wisedom of the Lord.

And though he *love himself*, and have a nature that is unwilling of suffering, and feareth the displeasure of God, and the threatnings of his holy Law: yet doth he unfeignedly justifie the Law, and acknowledge it to be holy, and just, and good; and would not have the very threatnings of it to be repealed and blotted out, if he had his choice: for he knows that the Determinations of God are the best, and that none but he is fit to govern, and therefore he desires that he himself may be taught better to *obey*, and not that he may *rule*; and wisheth that he were more conformed to the Law; and not that the Law were conformed to him; and fain he would have his own will brought up to Gods, but wisheth not Gods will to be crookened and brought down to his. As far as men have *self-denyal*, this is so.

9. Moreover, as it is Gods Prerogative to be the *Soveraign Ruler* of *our selves*, so also *of all others* as well as us. But when sin had set up *self*, man would not only Rule himself, but would *rule all others*. An eager desire there is in the unsanctified *selfish* heart, that he might be Ruler of Town and Country, and all might be brought to do his will. And hence it is that there is such resisting and grudging at good Governors, and that men are so ambitious and fain would be highest, because they would have their own wills fulfilled by all, and therefore would have power to force men to it: Hence it is that there is such a stir in the world for Crowns and Kingdoms: and few men have ever been heard of, that have refused a Scepter when it was offered them, yea or that would not step out of their way for it, and wound their Consciences, and hazard all their hopes of heaven for it, if they found themselves in a likelyhood of obtaining it; because where *self* doth raign at home, it would raign also over all others. Nothing more pleaseth the Carnal mind, then to have his will, and to have all men do what he would have them, and to see all at his beck, and each man seeking to know his Pleasure, and ready to receive his word for Law. This is the reign of *self*.

But sanctification teaching men *self-denyal*, doth make them look

look first at the Doing of *Gods will*; and would have all the world obedient to that; and for their *own* wills, they resign them absolutely to Gods, and would not have men obey them but in a due subordination to the Lord. As they affect no Dominion or Government but for God, so they desire not men to obey their wills any further then it is necessary to the obedience of Gods will, to which they are serviceable and conform. The self-denying sanctified man hath as careful an eye up and down the world for Gods interest, as the *self-seeker* hath for his own: And as eagerly doth he long to hear of the setting up of the Name, and Kingdom, and Will or Laws of God in the world, as the ambitious man longs for the setting up of his own. And it as much rejoyceth the holy self-denying man to hear that Gods Laws are set up and obeyed, and that the world doth stoop to Jesus Christ, as it would rejoyce the Carnal *selfish* wretch to be the Lord and Master of all himself, and his will become the Law of the world. An Holy self-denying man would be far gladder to hear that *Africa*, *America*, and the rest of the unbelieving part of the world were Converted to Christ by the power of the Gospel, and that the Heathens were his inheritance, and the Kingdomes of the world become the Kingdoms of Christ, then if he had Conquered all these himself, and were become the King or Emperour of the world. For as *self* is the chief interest of an unsanctified man; so *Christ* and the *will* of God is the chief Interest of the sanctified: for he hath destroyed the contradictory Interest of *self*, and renounced it, and hath taken God for his End, and Christ for the Way, and consequently for his highest Interest: so that he hath now no business in the world but Gods business; he hath no honour to regard but Gods honour; he hath none to exalt but the King of Kings; he knows no gain but the pleasing of God; he knows no content or pleasure but Gods pleasure: for the life that he now lives in the flesh, he lives by faith of the Son of God, that hath loved him and given himself for him; and thereby hath drawn him out of himself to the Fountain and End of Love; and so it is not he that lives, but Christ liveth in him, *Gal.*2.20.

10. Lastly, it is the high Prerogative of God, to have the

honour and Power and Glory ascribed to him, and be praised as the author of all Good to the world : and his Glory he will not give to another : Man and all things are Created, and preserved and ordered for his Glory : Nor shall man have any Glory but in the Glorifying of his Lord : when we fell short of Glorifying the Lord, we also fell short of the Glory which we expected by him.

But when sin turned man from *God* to *himself*, he became regardless of the honour of God, and his mind was bent on his *own Honour*, so that he would have every knee bow to *himself*, and every eye observe him, and every mind think highly of him, and every tongue to praise and magnifie him: It doth him good at the heart, to have vertue, and wisedom, and greatness ascribed to him, and an excellency in all; and to have all the good that is done ascribed to him, and to be taken to be as the Sun in the firmament that all must eye, and none can live without, and to be esteemed the benefactor of all. When he hears that men extoll him and speak nothing of him but well, and great things; and when he sees them all observe and reverence him, and take him as an Oracle for wisedom, or as an Angel of God, O how this pleaseth his unsanctified *selfish* mind! Now he hath his End, even that which he would have; and verily saith Christ, *they have their reward.*

But when Sanctification hath taught men to deny themselves, they see then that they are vile and miserable sinners, and loath themselves for all their abominations, and are base in their own eyes, and humble themselves before the Lord, and abhor themselves in dust and ashes, and say, *To us belongeth shame and confusion of face; Not unto us O Lord, not unto us, but to thy Name give the glory*, Psal. 115. 1. Dan. 9. 7, 8. The holy *self-denying* soul desireth no glory and honour, but what may conduce to the glory and honour of his Lord: His heart riseth against base flattering worldlings, that would rob God and give the honour to him: nor can they do him a greater displeasure then to ascribe that to him that belongeth only to God, or to bring to him or any creature, his Makers due. If God be honoured, he takes himself as honoured, if he be never so low: If God be dishonoured, he is troubled, and his own honour will not

not make him reparation. As he liveth himself to the glory of God, and doth all that he doth in the world to that end; so would he have all others do so too. And if God be most honoured by his disgrace and shame, he can submit.

And thus I have shewed you the true Nature both of *selfishness* and of *self-denyal*. But observe that I describe it as it is in it self: but yet there is too much selfishness in the best, which may hinder the fulness of these effects. But *self-denyal* is predominant in all the sanctified, though it be not perfect.

Chap. II.

Reasons of the Necessity *of self-denyal to salvation.*

III. And now you have seen the true Description of self-denyal, and I hope, if you have studyed it, you know what it is that is required; I shall next shew you some of the Reasons of its Necessity, and prove it to you beyond dispute that it is no indifferent thing, nor the high attainment of some few of the Saints, but a thing that all must have that will be saved, being of the very essence of holiness it self; so that it is as possible to live without life, as to be Holy without self-denyal; and as possible to be saved whether God will or no, as to be saved without *self-denyal* in a predominant degree. And if any of you think strange that salvation should be laid on so high a duty, and that no man can be a true Disciple that denyeth not himself, even to the forsaking of his Life, and all, when God requireth it, I shall shew you that Reason that should easily satisfie you.

Reas. 1. Till a man Deny *himself*, he *denyeth* God, and doth not indeed believe in him, and love him, and take him to be his God. And I hope you will grant that no man can be saved that believes not in God, nor Loveth him, nor takes him for his God: He that will deny God and yet think to be saved, must think to be saved in despight of God. The first Article of our faith, and of our Baptismal Christian Covenant, is to Believe in God the Father, and take him for our God, and give

up our selves to be his people. But this no man can do without self-denyal. For by all that I have said in the description of it, you may see that *selfishness* is most contrary to God, and would rob him of all his high Prerogatives, and God should be no God, if the *selfish* sinner had his will: and he doth not heartily consent that he shall be God to him. I have formerly told you, that *self* is the God of wicked men, or the worlds great Idol: And that the inordinate Love of Pleasure, Profits and Honour, in Trinity, is all but this *self-love* in Unity; and that in the Malignant Trinity of Gods enemies, the flesh is the first and foundation, the world the second, and the Devil the third: Every man is an Idolater so far as he is selfish. God is not a bare name: He that takes away his Essence or Attributes and Prerogatives, and yet thinks he believeth in him, because he leaveth him his Name and Titles, doth as bad as they that set up an Image, and worship that instead of God, or that worship the Sun or Moon as Gods, because they somewhat represent his Glory: for sure a bare Name hath as little substance as an Image; much less can you say it hath more then the Sun. Now *selfish* ungodly men do all of them rob God, and give his honour and prerogatives to themselves, and put him off with empty Titles: They call him their God, but will not have him for their End, their Portion and Felicity, nor give him the strongest Love of their hearts: They will not take him as their Absolute Owner, and devote themselves and all they have to him, and stand with a willing mind to his Disposé. They will not take him for their Soveraign, and be Ruled by him, nor deny themselves for him, nor seek his honour and interest above their own. They call him their Father, but deny him his honour; and their Master, but give him not his fear, *Mal.* 1.6. They depend not on his hand, and live not by his Law, and to his Glory; and therefore they do not take him for their God. And can you expect that God should save those that deny him and would dethrone him? that is, his very enemies.

Reas. 2. Yea more then so; *God will not save those that make themselves their own gods, when they have rejected him.* But all these unsanctified *selfish* men, do make themselves their own gods: for in all the ten particulars before mentioned, they take

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to themselves the Prerogatives of God. 1. They would be their *own End* and look no further. 2. They *use* all Creatures but as means to this End; yea God himself is esteemed but for themselves. 3. They love their present Life and Prosperity better then God. 4. They would *be their own*, and live as their *own*, and not as those that are none of their own. 5. They would have the Creatures to be their Own, and use them as their Own, and not as God's. 6. They must care for themselves, and shift for themselves, and dare not trust themselves wholly upon God. 7. They would dispose of themselves and their own conditions, and of all things else. 8. They would Rule themselves, and be from under the Laws and Government of God. 9. They would be the Rulers of all others, and have all men do their wills. 10. And they would be honoured and admired by all, and have the praise ascribed to them. And if all this be not to set up themselves as Gods or Idols in the world, I know not what is. Certainly God is so far from having a thought of saving such vile Idolaters (in this Condition) that they are the principal objects of his high displeasure, and the fairest Marks for his Justice to shoot at: and he is engaged to pull them down and tread them into hell: should God stand by and see a company of rebellious sinners sit down in his Throne, or usurp his Soveraignty and Divine Prerogatives, and let them alone, yea and advance them to his Glory? No, he hath resolved that *he that humbleth himself shall be exalted, and he that exalteth himself shall be brought low.* And what higher *self-exaltation* can there be, then to make our selves as gods to our selves? And therefore who should be brought lower then such?

Reas. 3. *No man can be a Christian that takes not Christ for his Lord and Saviour: But no man without this self-denyal can take Christ for his Lord and Saviour*: and therefore no man without self-denyal can be a Christian, and so be saved. He that makes *himself* his *End*, cannot make Christ as Christ his way: for Christ is the way to the *Father*, and not to *Carnal-self*. Nay the business that Christ came upon into the world, was to pull down and subdue this *self*. Moreover whoever taketh Christ for his Saviour, must know from what it is that he must save him; and that is principally from *self*: And no man

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can take Christ for his Saviour that renounceth not *self-confidence*, and is not willing to be saved from the Idolatry of *self-exaltation*. No man can take Christ for his Master or Teacher, that comes not into his school as a little child, renouncing the guidance of *Carnal-self*, and sensible of his need of an heavenly Teacher. No man can take Christ for his King and Lord, and give up himself to him as his own and as his Subject, that hath not learned to deny that *self* that claimes propriety and soveraignty in his stead. There is no Antichrist nor false Christ that ever was in the world, that doth more truly oppose Christ, and resist him in all the parts of his office, then Carnal *self*. It is this that will not stoop to his Righteousnes, or to his Guidance, and to his teaching and holy Government. *Self* is the *false Christ* or Saviour of the world, as well as the *false God*. And therefore there can be no salvation, where *self* is not denyed and taken down.

Reas. 4. *He that believeth not in the Holy Ghost, and taketh him not for his Sanctifier, cannot be a true Christian or be saved. But no man without this self-denyal believeth in the Holy Ghost, and taketh him for his Sanctifier:* And therefore without this *Self-denyal* no man can be a true Christian or be saved.

The very nature of sanctification consisteth in the turning a man from *himself* to God: in destroying *selfishnes*, and devoting the soul to God by Christ. And therefore it is past dispute, that none but the self-denying are sanctified: and therefore none but they do truly take the Holy Ghost for their Sanctifier, and truly believe in him. So far as men are in Love with the disease, its certain they will not use the Physitian.

Reas. 5. *No man is a true Christian and in a state of salvation, that denyeth, renounceth or rejecteth the word of God.* But all men that have not *self-denyal* (that hear the word of God) do renounce, deny it or reject it: and therefore no man without *self denyal* is a true Christian or can be saved. In the Scriptures it is that we *have eternal life*: its they that must *make us wise to salvation*: the man that will be *blessed*, must *meditate in them day and night*, Psal. 1. 3. And it is *not the hearers but the Doers of them that are blessed*. But nothing is more clear, then that the voice of Scripture calleth aloud on all men to deny themselves;

and

and that the scope of it is to cry down *self*, and set up God in Jesus Christ. It is the very drift and meaning of it from end to end to take down *self*, and abase men in their own eyes, and bring them home to God from whom they are revolted.

Reas. 6. *No man can be a Christian or be saved without saving Grace.* But no man without *self-denyal* hath saving Grace. For it is the nature of every Grace to carry man from *himself* to God by Christ. It is the work of *godly sorrow* to humble proud man, and break the heart of *carnal self.* It is the work of faith, for a *self-denying* soul to pass out for hope and life to Christ. It is the work of *Love* to carry us quite above *our selves* to that infinite goodness which we love: It is the nature of *holy fear* to confess our guilt and insufficiency, and to suspect our selves, and dread the fruit of our own wayes. Confidence doth bottom us upon God, and Hope it self doth imply a Despairing in *our selves.* Thankfulness doth pay the homage to him that hath saved us from our selves. And every grace hath *self-denyal* as half its very life or soul. And therefore it is certain that no man hath any more grace then he hath *self-denyal.*

Reas. 7. *They that reject the Ministry and the fruit of all the Ordinances of God, are not true Christians, nor cannot be saved*: But so do all among us that have not *self-denyal.* For the use of the Ministry is to call home sinners from *themselves* to God. The use of every *Ordinance* of God, is to get or keep down *carnal-self* and exalt the Lord. *Confession* is nothing but *self-abasing*: and he must *confess,* that will have the faithfull and just God to forgive him: for *he that covereth his sin shall not prosper,* 1 *John* 1. 9. *Prov.* 28. 13. *Prayer* is a confession of our own emptiness, insufficiency and unworthiness, and a flying from *our selves* for help unto another. In *Baptism* we come as condemned prisoners for a pardon, as it were with ropes about our necks, and strip our selves of the rags of our filthiness, that by the blood of the lamb we may be washed from our blood, and our sins may be buried as in the depth of the Sea. In the *Lords Supper* we renew the same Covenant, and receive the same renewed pardon; and still fly from *our selves* to Christ for life; and renounce our *carnal selves* by solemn Covenant, as a people coming home to God. So that never was any Ordinance

of God, effectual and saving on the soul of any, further then it brought them to *self-denyal*, or preserved, exercised or manifested it.

Reas. 8. *He that can do no work sincerely, nor go one step in the way of life, is no true Christian nor in a state life.* But this is the case of all that have not *self-denyal*. For *self* is their Principle, Rule and End: and he that hath either a false Principle, Rule or End, cannot be sincere in any of the means; much less when he is out in all of these. A *selfish* man is seeking *himself* in his very *Religion*; and is serving *himself* when he seemeth to be serving God. And indeed he doth not any service sincerely unto God, because he makes not God his End; And therefore cannot be accepted.

Reas. 9. *No man is a true Christian or can be saved, that sticks in the depth of his natural misery, in his lapsed state*: But so do all men that have not *self-denyal*: for it is *self* that they are faln to, and must be saved from.

Reas. 10. *No man can be a true Christian and be saved, that is not a member of the Holy Catholick Church and the Communion of Saints.* But so is none but the *self-denying*; for every true member of the Church hath a publick spirit, preferring the Churches interest to his own, and suffering with fellow members in their suffering, and having a care of one another, 1 *Cor.* 12. But the *self-seeking* unsanctified person is a stranger to this disposition.

Reas. 11. *He that is led by the greatest enemy of God and his own soul, is not a true Christian, nor in a state of life.* But so is every man that hath not learned to deny *himself*. For *self* is the greatest enemy of God and us. Escape but your own hands and you are out of danger. All the Devils in Hell cannot destroy you, if you would not be your own destroyers.

Reas. 12. Lastly, *It is a plain contradiction to be saved without self-denyal.* For as its *self* that we must be *saved from* both as our *End* and *Means* and greatest enemy: so to *stick* in *self* is still to be lost and miserable, and therefore not to be saved. So that the case is as plain as a case can be, that no man can be a true Christian or Disciple of Christ without self-denyal; and consequently none without it can be saved. I have

have been the briefer upon the Arguments, because the matter of some of them may come to be fuller opened anon in the Application.

Chap. III.

Use. 1. *A general complaint of the Prevalency of Selfishness.*

Use 1: AND now we have seen from the words of Christ the absolute Necessity of self-denial, and that there is no true Christianity nor salvation without it; let us next take a view of our selves, and of the world, and Judge of our condition by this certain Rule.

Look well into your selves, and into the world, and tell me whether you find not cause to lament, 1. That true Christianity is so rare a thing, even among the professors of Christianity, seeing self-denyal is so rare. 2. That Grace is so weak and small in the most of the regnerate, seeing self-denyal is so little and imperfect.

O if the name of Christians would prove us Christians, and the magnificent Titles we give to Christ would prove that we are his true Disciples; if reading, and hearing, and outward duties, and a cheap Religiousness would serve turn, we have then great store of Christians among us: If Christ would have left out but this one point of *self-denyal* from his Laws and conditions of salvation, what abundance of Disciples would he have had in the world? and how many millions might have come to heaven, that now must be shut out? It is this point that hindereth all sorts of Heathens and Infidels from being Christians. The Jews will believe in no Christ but one that will restore their Temple and outward glory, and make them great and Rulers of the world: and therefore they will not be the servants of that Christ that calleth them to the contempt of all these things, and of life it self for the hopes of an invisible Kingdom. The Mahometans had rather believe in *Mahomet* that giveth them leave to please their lust, then in Christ that

calleth them to mortification and self-denyal, and tells them of nothing but suffering and patience, duty and diligence, till they come into another world: The idolatrous Heathens abhor Christianity when they hear how much they must do and suffer, and all for a reward in the life to come. Its an informing instance that *Pet. Maffæus* gives us in his Indian History of the first King of *Congo* that was baptized: He quickly received the Articles of Faith, & the form of Worship, & the outside and cheaper part of Religion; and so did many of his Nobles and followers: But when he was called to confession, and understood that he must leave his gluttony, and drunkenness, and whoredom, and oppression, and inordinate pleasures, he would be a Christian no more; his Nobles perswading him, that the forsaking of all this mirth, and pleasure, and delights of the flesh, and taking up so strict a life, was too dear a price to pay for the hopes of a life to come, and it was better keep the pleasure they had, and put another life to the venture: And thus Christianity had been quickly banished that Kingdom again, if it had not taken deeper rooting in his Son and Heir *Alphonsus*, and made him venture his Crown and Life for the sake of Christ. And thus is it at the heart with the most, even of Baptized persons, and those that take themselves to be Christians: Because it is the Religion of the Countrey, and they are taught that there is no salvation without it, they will be baptized, and be called Christians, and say their Prayers, and come to Church, and say they believe in God the Father, Son and Holy Ghost, and they will go as far with you in Religion as they can without *denying themselves*: but for the rest, which is the life and truth of Christianity, they will not understand it, or believe that it is of such necessity: God forbid say they, that none should be Christians and saved but those that thus *deny themselves*, and take up their cross and forsake all they have, and accept not Life it self from Christ: They say they believe in Christ, and yet they say, God forbid his word should be true; or God forbid we should believe Christ that hath spoken this in the Gospel! See what kind of Christians multitudes are! *Every man and woman on earth, that take themselves for true Christians, and yet do not deny themselves, even life and*

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all for the sake of Christ and the hope of everlasting glory, are meer self-deceivers, and no true Christians at all. He that will save his life, saith Christ, shall lose it; that is, He that in his coming to Christ, and Covenanting with him, will put in an exception for the saving of his Life, and will forsake all for Christ if he be put to it, *except Life* it self, this man is no true Disciple of Christ, and shall be so far from saving his life, that he shall lose both heaven, and Life, and all: and the Justice of God shall take from him that Life which he durst not resign to the will of mercy; and he shall lose that for nothing which he would not lose for Christ and heaven. It is impossible for that man to be Christs Disciple, that loveth his life better then Christ and the hopes of Life everlasting, *Mat.* 10.37, 38. *Luk.* 14.25,26,33. Some *Self-denyal* there may be in the unsanctified: Many of them would leave a little pleasure or profit rather then be damned; and many had rather suffer a little then venture upon eternal sufferings. But I beseech you remember that this is the lowest degree of *Self-denyal* that is saving, to set more by Christ and the hopes of glory then by all this world and life it self; and to be habitually resolved to forsake life and all, rather then to forsake him. No less then this is proper *self-denyal*, or will prove you Christians, and in a state of life. This was the tryal that Christ put one to, that had thought to have been his Disciple, *Luke* 18. 21. [*Yet lackest thou one thing: sell all that thou hast and distribute to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in Heaven, and come and follow me*] Not that every man must actually sell all, but every man must set more by Heaven then all, and therefore part with all when Christ would have him; and he that is not thus resolved, let him go never so far in all other things, doth yet *lack one thing*, and such a *one thing* as he shall never be saved without. For the meaning of the text is, that Christ would try him by this command, whether he set more by any thing then him, and whether he set more by heaven or earth; and so would have us all to judge of our selves by the same evidence *within*, though he put not all on the same way of discovering it. Many a man can deny *self* the superfluities of pleasure, and as this rich man did, can avoid enormous crimes, and say of whoredom, and theft, and drunkenness, and op-

pression, and gross deceit, *All these have I avoided from my youth.* Education may moderate some *selfish* desires, and natural temper may further that moderation: and custom and good company and holy precepts may yet do more: and wit may teach men to do or suffer somewhat rather then to run on the wrath of God: and therefore many thousands may deny *self* the pleasure of some inordinate lust, or of some recreation, or excess in meat or drink, and yet be far from denying life and all, and so from the true self-denyal of a Christian: Nay a man may *deny self* for *self* in many particulars, and so may *please self* more then he *denyeth* it. Many a civil ingenuous Gentleman and other persons will forbear the disgracefull sins of Drunkenness, filthy speaking, Whoredome, Incivility, notorious Prophaness, even because they *are disgracefull*, and therefore are against the Interest of *self*; so much as *self* can possibly spare, a carnal heart may be brought to part with. But still *self* is alive and predominant within them, still it is the Ruling end and Principle. But to go out of *self* to God, and resign up our *selves* to him, and possess no interest but *him* and in *him*, and to have nothing that we esteem or love, or care for, in comparison of him, knowing that for him we were made, redeemed, preserved and sanctified, and therefore desiring to be wholly and only his, and to have no credit, no goods, no life, no *self*, but what is *his*, for his service, at his will and at his Disposal and Government and provision; this is the true *self-denyal*, which the spirit of God worketh in a prevailing though not a perfect measure, in every gracious believing soul.

But alas Sirs, how strange is this in the world, and how weak and low in the souls where it is found! And what matter of Lamentation would a survey of the world, or of our selves present us with! Is not SELF the great Idol which the whole world of unsanctified men doth worship? Who is it that ruleth the children of disobedience, but *carnal self*? For what is all the stir and stirrings, the tumults and contentions of the world but for *self*? This ruleth Kingdoms, and this is it that raiseth wars, and what is it, except the works of Holiness but *self* is the author of? Look unto the Thrones and Kingdoms of the earth, and conjecture how many *self* hath advanced and placed

placed there; and how few have stayed till God enthroned them and gave them the Crown and Scepter with his approbation. Among all the Nobles and great ones of the earth, that abound in riches, how few are there that were not set a work by *self* and ruled by it, in the getting or keeping or using their riches, dignities and honours? Look on the great Revenews of the Nation, and of the world, and consider whether God or *self*, have the more of it. One man hath many thousands a year, and another hath many hundreds, and how much of this is devoted to God, and how much to *carnal self*? And the poor that have but little, would think us *injurious* to them if we should call to *them* for any thing for God, who have not enough for *themselves*; when indeed God must have all, and *self* must have nothing, but what it hath by way of return from God again, and that for God, and not for *self* but as subservient unto him. Alas, of many hundred thousand pounds a year, which the inhabitants of a Countrey possess among them, how little hath God that should have all, and how much hath *self* that should have nothing? O dreadfull reckoning when these Accounts must be all cast up! Judge by the use of all whether *self* have not yet Dominion of all? If men throw out to God his tenth, which is none of their own; or if they cast him now and then some inconsiderable alms, when in his members he is fain to beg for it first, they think they have done fair, though *self* devour all the rest. Is it more think you for God or *self* that our Courts of Law are filled with so many Suits, and Lawyers have so much employment? Is it more think you for God or *self* that Merchants compass Sea and Land for commodity? Who is it that the Souldier fights for? is it for God or *self*? Who is it that the Tradesman deals for, that the Plowman labours for, that the Travailer goes for? is it more for God or *self*? Who is it that the most of mens thoughts are spent for, and the most of their words are spoken for, and the most of their rents and wealth laid out for, and the most of their precious time imployed for? is it for God or *self*? Consider of it whether it be not *self* that finally and morally rules the world. What else do most live for or look after? And is not the common Piety, Religion

gion and Charity of the world, a meer sending God some scraps of the leavings of carnal *self*; If the flesh be full, or have enough, then God shall have the crums that fall from its Table, or at most so much as it can spare: but till the flesh have done and be satisfied, God must stay even for these scraps and crums! and if they can but say, [*I want it my self, or have use for it my self*] they think it a sufficient answer to all demands. One may see by the irregularity of the motions of the world, the confusions, and croffings, and mutabilities, and contradictions, the doing and undoing again, the differences and fierce contendings, that it is not God but *self* that is the End and Principle of the motions. Nay most men are so dead to God, and alive only to *themselves*, that they know not what we mean when we tell them, and plainly tell them, what it is to live to God, and what it is to serve him in all their affairs; and to eat, and drink, and do all things for his glory; but they ask in their hearts as *Pharaoh, Who is the Lord, that I should serve him?*] And when they read these passages about *self-denyal*, and about referring all to God, they will not understand them: for they are unacquainted with God, and know no other God *indeed* but *self*, though in *name* they do.

Nay it were well if *self* were kept out of the Church, and out of the Ministers of the Gospel, that must teach the world to deny *themselves*; that it did not with too many choose their habitations, and give them their call, and limit them in their labours, and direct them in the manner and measure; It were well if some Ministers did not study for *self*, and preach and dispute for *self*, and live for *self*; when they materially preach against *self*, and teach men *self-denyal*. And then for our People, alas, it rules their families, it manageth their business, it drives on their trades, it comes to Church with them, and fights within them against the word, and perverteth their judgement, and will let them relish nothing, and receive nothing but what is consistent with *selfish* interest: in a word, it makes men ungodly, it keeps them ungodly, and it is their very ungodliness it self. O were it not for carnal *self*, how easily might we deal with all sorts of sinners? but this is it that overcometh us.

Chap. IV.

The Prevalency of selfishness in all Relations.

Beside all the generals already mentioned, it will not be amiss to give you some particular Instances of the power of *selfishness*, and the rareness of *self-denyal* in the world, that you may see what cause of lamentation is before us.

1. How ready and speedy, how effectual and diligent, how constant and unwearied are they in the service of *self*? and how slow and backward, how remiss and negligent, how unconstant and tired are they in the works that are meerly for God, and their salvation? Do I need to prove it to you? You may as well call for proof whether there are men in the world? I were best for instance begin next home. Many Ministers think it a drudgery and a toil that God requireth not at their hands to confer with every family in their Parishes, and instruct them privately in the matters of salvation. But see what *self* can do: If the same men have but their tithe to gather, they will not think it a needless thing, to go or send to every family, and speak with them all about their own business. At least if it were any considerable sum, they would not lose it for want of speaking for.

Our neighbours do many of them think it much that we should call them to be personally Instructed or Catechized, and they will not come at us; but say, [What needs all this ado? have we not teaching enough at Church? Its Children that must be Catechized, and we are past Children.] You see how little interest God and their Ministers and their own salvation hath in them: But will you see what *carnal self* can do more? Had I but money enough, I would undertake to make them come to me, and follow me as a horse will follow his provender! Had I but ten pound a piece to give them, yea or but ten shillings, I do not think I should have any refuse to come and fetch it, unless it were those that now are the forwardest in seeking relief for the wants of their souls. Had I but the estates or lives of all these men in my power, how easily would they be ruled and

how diligently and submissively would they attend, that now for God and their everlasting life, disdain to come and seek instructions. And yet these men would scarce believe you, if you should tell them that *self* and the *world* is made their God, and that God himself is denyed and rejected by them.

Moreover, a long time I have been perswading all the families in the Town and Parish, to read the Scripture, and daily call upon God together: I have proved it their duty from Scripture, and this doth not prevail. But see what *flesh* and *self* can do? If these men were but sure of ten or twenty shillings a time, for every Morning and Evening that they pray together, I warrant you, what ever the heart did, the lips should be taught to do their part. O how busie would all the Town and Parish be to learn to pray, that now look not after it? I do not believe that there is ever a house among them all that would not very shortly set up prayer, if they were but paid for it after these rates? Judge now whether *God* or *self* bear sway among these men, and whether soul or body be more regarded.

Moreover, we have too many drunkards in the Town, that no means that we can use will restrain and keep sober. They love the drink, and they cannot forbear; and tell them of Gods word, that doth threaten them with damnation, and they will for all that be drunk the next day. But if one of these wretches might have but ten pound a week on condition he would forbear, I do not think for all this but he could forbear: Or if he were sure that for every cup of drink, he should drink after it a cup of piss or gall, I warrant you he would soon begin to abate.

We have abundance of ignorant sensual men that for love of sin refuse Church-Government, and will not come under it. But if the Magistrate would but make a Law, that all men shall be members of a particular Church and submit to discipline, or forfeit but twenty shillings a moneth, how few refusers should we have in all the Town or Countrey?

We have many that seldome come to hear in the publick Assemblies; but let the Parliament make a Law that they shall pay for their refusal, and how readily will it bring the most of them

them? (unless they have hopes that the Law will not be executed) And judge now whether *self* or *God* have greater interest in these mens hearts.

I see but one piece of *self-denyal* among this sort of people in this Town, and thats this: Though the officers are to give the money to the poor which they have from swearers, drunkards, unlicensed and abusive Ale-sellers, prophaners of the Lords day, *&c.* yet that sort of the poor themselves do hate those officers that are zealous in their duties. This is strange, that the love of money doth not change them. But whether it be that they can deny their flesh for the Devil, though not for God; and in *enmity* to godliness, though not to *further* it; or whether it be that the officers do use to give their mony to an honester sort of poor, and these have none of it, I cannot well tell.

And having given so many sad instances of the power of *self* and scarcity of *self-denyal* in others, I hope the Magistrates will not take it ill if we help them to discern this enemy in themselves, nor be offended that they come last, unless it were in a more honourable cause. I hear the best and wisest men that I can meet with, complain that in most places, Ale-houses flourish under the Magistrates Noses; and that whoredom, swearing, prophaning the Lords dayes, shall seldom be punished, but when they are very much urged to it, nor then neither if it will but displease a neighbour, or friend, especially if it be a worshipfull swearer or drunkard that is to be punished. We see in most places that its more then the Justice can do to put down one Ale-house of many that they confess should be suppressed; and I doubt but *few* can keep them from *increasing*: Men say that there is so much ado before they can have Justice from many of them, and those that seek it are counted but for busie troublesome fellows, that many are ready to let all alone: And whence is all this, that men *in Power* can do so little against those that have *no power* to resist them? Why alas the cause is plain: *Self* is against it: They have none but God and Ministers, and a few precise fellows to perswade them to it: and they have no greater motives, then what is fetcht from Heaven and Hell to move them to it: and these are but small matters with them (I speak

of the unsanctified) It must be one that hath greater interest in them then God that must perswade them to it: It must be more powerfull matters then the promises of Heaven and the Threatnings of damnation that must prevail with such moderate Gentlemen as these. And who is it that can do this, that God and their salvation may not do? Why even *self*, *carnal self*; If you know but how to engage their own *self-interest* in the business, I warrant you it will go better on. Let but every informer be well paid for *his* pains, and every Justice have a hundred pound from the Exchequer for every due execution of such laws, and how roundly would the work go on? Then they would not say [*We cannot do it*, or *We are not bound to look after them.*] Do you think I wrong them or speak without proof? I will leave it to your judgement when I have given you but these few instances. Let but the Plague break out in the Town, and infect but a quarter as many houses as here are infectious Alehouses that harbour tiplers and drunkards, and see whether the Magistrates of this or any Town will not a little better bestir themselves, and send to search after infected places, and nail up their doors, and write on them [*Lord have mercy on us*] that all may take warning and keep away: They will not here be offended with Informers, nor say, [*Am I bound to look after them?*] And why are they not as zealous against sin as against the plague? Great reason! *Self* is for sin; and *God* only is against it: but *self* is against the Plague, because it is concerned in it: sin doth but hurt the soul, and bring men to Helfire; but the plague destroyes their body; and this is the greater matter with them, because they have *flesh* and *sense* to judge of it; but they have not faith to believe the other.

Again, let but one house in the Town be on fire, and all are up to quench it, and the Bell is rung; and the Magistrate doth not think that he wants a Call himself to look after it. And when the fire of Hell is kindling in an Ale-house, thats nothing, but must be let alone: *there's* no such zeal, nor no such haste. And why so? Why one they *see in good sadness*, and perceive that it is *fire indeed*: but the other they *believe in jest*, as if it would prove but a painted fire.

Again, let but an ungodly fellow slander the Magistrate, or call

call him all to naught, especially if he give him but two or three boxes on the ear, and see whether he will let that man alone. But let the same man abuse the name of God, and break his Laws, and with too many he may be let alone, unless they be urged to do Justice. And how comes this difference? Why *self* is toucht in one, and it is but God (*But God!* O Atheists!) that's touched in the other. *Self* can do more with them then God can do (Remember still when I say that *self* can do more with them then God, that I speak not of what God *could* do by his Omnipotency if he would; but of the final Causality, or the small interest that God hath in their hearts by holy Faith and Love.)

Again, let but a servant rob the Magistrate, and carry his money and goods to an Ale-seller to reset; and try whether he will look after him and the Ale-seller. And why not as soon and as zealously when Ale-sellers reset mens sons and servants, and drown mens understandings and turn them into beasts? Why? becaus in one it is but God and mens souls that are concerned; (a matter of nothing) but in the other it is *self*, (a greater matter with them.)

Shall I give you but one instance more, that the Ale-sellers themselves will take my part in, so far as to bear me witness that its true! Here are Farmers of the Excise that have power to know what Ale-houses are in the Town, and their gain lyeth on it: and there shall scarce a man in Town or Countrey sell Ale so secretly but they will know it; nor sell a Barrel but what they are acquainted with. They do not say, [*I am not bound to go search after them:*] nor that they be not able to discover them and to bring them to pay Excise. But the *Justices* (too commonly) can overlook abundance that the Excise-men can find; and they cannot make one of twenty pay, when the other can; And whats the matter? Why one works for *self* and *money*, and the other works but for God and his own and other mens salvation (a small matter!) See then beyond denyal what *self* and *money* can do with such men, when God and mens salvation can do next to nothing.

But I must desire you not to mistake me, and think I speak this of any honest godly Magistrate, and abuse the good by

joyning them with the bad! No: far be it from me to be so injurious. For its evident that they can be no good men, nor have any true Love of God in their souls, that are such in a predominant sense as I have here described. It is not in my thoughts to lay this blame on any honest Godly Magistrate: for none but the ungodly would do as I have mentioned, and prefer themselves before the Lord, and the bodies of men before the souls.

1 Tim. 6. 5. And, alas, if the Soveraign Powers of the Nations of the world were not too sick of the same disease, gain would not be accounted Godliness, but Godliness the greatest gain: and carnal Policie would not go for Piety, but true Piety would go for the surest Policy: It would not be so common in most Nations to have the Truth and Cause of Christ disowned, and his servants persecuted, and their lives and blood to be made a sacrifice to *carnal Self* and worldly interests. Nor would the breaches of the Churches be so long unhealed, and grow wider and wider, and few much regard them, but all have their own work to do which must be looked after. Yea and the Cause of Christ and the Gospel must be trod down if it stand in the way of their own: And the Churches must be set on fire by their wars and contentions for their *selfish* interests. And if *Self* were not too strong among us, we should not have had such connivence at doctrinal and practical abominations, nor so much delay or neglect of healing the discomposed Churches, and uniting the divided Christians, or attempting it more effectually then we have done. But because I desire to speak to none but those that are within my hearing, I will return home to our selves.

The holy ordering and instructing of families, and suppressing sin in children and servants, is one of the most effectual works, for the building up of the Church, and the glory and stability of the Common-wealth. O if Parents and Masters would but sanctifie their houses to the Lord, and teach their families the will and fear of God, and do their best (by punishment, when instruction will not serve) to hinder sin, how fast would Reformation then go on? And what hindreth? why carnal Self: If it were but for worldly commodities they would do more: Would you have me prove it? Let experience speak. Let a

servant

servant or child go prayerless to their work, and few regard it: but they will not go without meat, or drink, or cloathes. The Master will suffer them to neglect Gods service; but if they neglect his own, and should do him no more or better service then they do to God, they should soon hear of it, and be turned out of door, and they were no servants for him. They will teach their children to do their *own* work, or set them Apprentices to learn it: but the work of God and their salvation, they shall for them have little teaching in, how plainly soever God hath commanded it them, *Deut.* 11. 18, 19. & 6. 6, 7, 8. *Eph.* 6. 4.

Let a servant or child reproach his Master or Parent, or call them all to naught, and they think not fit to put up that (nor indeed is it) but let them swear by the name of God or break his Laws, and they can patiently bear with it, and a cold rebuke like *Eli's* will serve turn. They can get them into field or shop to work together, but they cannot get them before and after to prayer together. And why is all this? Why one is for *Self*, and the other is for God: One is for the *body*, and the other is for the *soul*. So that you see what *Self* can do, and how commonly it is the master of Family, Towns and Countries, because it is the master in mens souls.

God must be loved above *all*, and our neighbour as our *selves*: But if God were allowed but so much love as a very neighbour should have, it would not be all so ill with the *selfish* world as now it is. But because I have been so long on this first discovery of the power of *Self*, and the scarcity of *Self-denyal*, I will be shorter in the rest that follow.

CHAP.

Chap. V.

The power of Selfishness upon mens opinions in Religion.

2. ANother instance Discovering the Reign of selfishness in the world, is, *The great Power that it hath to form mens Opinions and Conceptions in Religion.* Though the understanding naturally be inclined to Truth, yet a *selfish* byas upon the soul, especially on the *will*, doth commonly delude it, and make the vilest errour seem to be Truth to it, and the most useful Truth to seem an errour. The Will hath much command over the Understanding: and when *selfishness* is become the very habit, the byas, the nature of the will, you may easily conjecture how it will pervert the understanding. But what need we more then experience to satisfie us. Do you not see that where *self* is but deeply engaged, the judgement is bribed or overmastered, and carried from the Truth? So that as the eye that looks through a coloured glass, doth see all things as if they were of the same colour as the glass: So the understanding that is mastered by a *selfish* inclination, thinks every thing is truth that favoureth his *self-interest*. And here I shall offer you some more particular instances.

1. We all see that almost all the world is of that Religion or Opinion which hath the countenance of the Government that they live under, and the persons that have greatest power on their reputation, or at least which is consistent with their safety, if not rising and prosperity in the world. The Turks are commonly Mahometans: the subjects of *Rome*, and *Spain*, and *Austria*, &c. are generally Papists: those in *Denmark*, *Sweden*, *Saxony*, &c. are generally Lutherans: those of *Scotland*, *England*, *Helvetia*, &c. are commonly Calvinists (as they are called.) I know the power of education is great, and hearing evidence only on one side, may byas a well-meaning man: But Papists and Protestants (as to the learned part) have the Books of the contrary-minded at hand: And therefore that Opinions should run in a stream, and whole Countries almost be of a party, must needs be much from the power of *selfishness*, because they are swayed

swayed by them that have the power of their reputation, and estates and liberties in the world.

2. Moreover, when a man is by custom grown *self conceited*, or by the power of Pride is wise in his own eyes, how hard a matter do we find it to convince such men by the clearest evidence! They will not see, when they can hardly wink so close as to keep out the light. *It is their opinion*, and therefore shall be so: and they will hold it because it is their own.

3. Especially if it be an Opinion of a mans own invention, which is doubly his own, both as he is the contriver and possessor, how close will he stick to it, too commonly beyond the evidence of truth, because that *self* hath so great an interest in it?

4. Yea if a man be but deeply engaged for it, either by laborious Disputes, or confident owning it, or any way, so as that his credit lyeth on it, how tenacious will he be of it, because of the powerful interest of *Self*?

5. And if it be but an Opinion that seems to befriend any *former Opinion* that we have much engaged for, how much doth *selfishness* usually appear in our inordinate propensity to it?

6. Also if we live in daies of persecution, how easily do we receive those Opinions that would keep us from prison and fire? Or if any suffering lie upon it, we commonly take that side to be right, that is safest to the flesh, (except when *self* would be advanced by the occasion of sufferings) And in prosperity, if there be any controversie arise, which our gain is concerned in, how easily believe we the thriving opinion? If any Oath, Engagement, or Duty be imposed on us by those that have Power to do us harm, the generality are for it, be it what it will. In all these cases it is commonly *Carnal Self* that is the Judge.

And how far *Self* commands in such cases, you may see by these discoveries following.

1. In studying the case, mens thoughts run almost all one way. They study what to say for their own opinions, and how to answer all that is against them: but they study but very little what may be said on the other side. They sit at their studies with a byassed will, inclining or commanding their understanding what to do; even to prove that to be true,

which they would have to be true, whether it be so or not.

2. And hence it is that the weakest Arguments on their own side do seem sufficient, if not invincible; and they stand wondering at the blindness of all those men that cannot see the force of them: But no Arguments seem to have any weight, that are brought against them. And all this is from the power of *self*.

3. Yea sometimes when they are silenced and know not what to say for their opinions, nor how to answer the Arguments for the contrary, yet they can say, *We are are of this mind, and we will be of this mind.* And why but because it is espoused to them and their own?

4. And hence it is that if a man be but an admirer of us, or of our own opinion in other things, we are readyer to receive an opinion from him then from another.

5. And hence it is that Disputations do so seldom change mens minds, because they take it to be a dishonour to be changed by another (unless it be a person of great renown;) we envy to an Opposite the glory of altering our understandings: But if we may have the doing of it our selves by the power of our own understandings and studies, we will sometimes yield to change our minds. He is a stranger to the ungodly world that seeth not how much *self interest* doth, to master their understandings, and turn their hearts from the holy doctrine of Christ, and how much it doth to make them like or dislike their teachers, or any point or practice in Religion. And he is a stranger even among Divines themselves, that seeth not the sway that *self* doth bear in their judgements, and disputes, and course of life, and the choice of their party or society to which they join themselves.

CHAP.

Chap. VI.

Mens great averſneſs to coſtly or troubleſome duties.

3. ANother diſcovering inſtance of the rarity of *ſelf-denyal* is this, *The great averſneſs of men to any coſtly, or troubleſome, or ſelf-denying duty,* how neceſſary ſoever, how plainly ſoever revealed in the Scripture, and how generally ſoever acknowledged by the Church: As if *ſelf* had a Negative voice in the making of Laws for the Government of the world, and none muſt be binding without its conſent. I ſhall come down to ſome more particular inſtances.

1. The great duty of charitable relieving our brethren in neceſſity to the utmoſt of our power, is commonly made almoſt nothing of in the world. And men cheat their ſouls by thinking *they are paſſed from death to life becauſe they love the brethren* with ſuch a cold and barren love as will neither lay down eſtate for them, nor venture life for them, but think they are ſure Chriſtians, becauſe they can ſay as the believers that *James* mentioneth, [*Depart in peace: be you warmed and filled, but give them not that which is neceſſary thereto*] *Jam.* 2. 16. Though it be told them plainly by Chriſt himſelf that it is not a fruitleſs uneffectual love, but that which cauſeth them to feed and cloath and viſit the Saints, that muſt ſtand them in ſtead at judgement, *Mat.* 25. and the Apoſtle asketh them, *How the love of God can dwell in that man that ſeeth his brother have need, and ſhutteth up the bowels of his compaſſion from him,* 1 *John* 3. 17. Yet do men think that by dropping now and then a penny, they have diſcharged all this great duty. And when they ſee many wayes by which they might promote the Goſpel, and help the Church, and ſerve God with their eſtates, yet *ſelf* will not let them ſee the meaning of the plaineſt Scriptures that do require it.

2. When men ſhould practiſe the great duty of forgiving injuries, treſpaſſes and debts, and of loving our enemies, and bleſſing them that curſe us, and praying for them that hate and perſecute us, how ſtubbornly doth *ſelfiſhneſs* reſiſt theſe duties.

What abuudance of words may you uſe in vain, with moſt men to perſwade them to any of this work? No: they *muſt* have their *right*; and that which is their *own*, though it be to the undoing of their brother. Paſſion and revenge even boil within them, and the thoughts of an injury ſtick in their minds; and if they do take on them diſſemblingly to forgive it, yet they cannot forget it nor hearily love a brother that diſpleaſeth them, much leſs an enemy: And all this is from the dominion of *ſelf*, and ſhews that it prevaileth above God in the ſoul, and therefore ſhews a graceleſs heart.

3. When the Miniſters of the Goſpel themſelves ſhould be painfull in their great and neceſſary work, and ſhould *watch over all the flock*, Acts 20. 28. *warning every man, and teaching every man in all wiſdom, that they may preſent every man perfect in Chriſt Jeſus*, Col. 1. 28. *condeſcending to men of the loweſt ſort*, and teaching them *in ſeaſon, and out of ſeaſon*, what reaſonings and ſhifts will *ſelf* bring in to reſiſt ſo great and excellent a duty, and prove it no duty, and that God will give them leave to ſpare their pains; and all becauſe of the Powerfull intereſt of *ſelf*?

4. And let the ſame Miniſters have a diſordered flock, that hath ſcandalous members, eſpecially if they be great *ones*, or *many*, and how rarely will they do their duty to them, in plain reproof, and in caſe of impenitency and continuance in ſin, by Publike Admonition and Rejection? what ſhiftings and cavillings will they find againſt this diſpleaſing work of Diſcipline? even when they will reproach a man themſelves whoſe *Opinion* is againſt Diſcipline, and when they have preacht and written and diſputed ſo much for it; and almoſt all parties are agreed of the neceſſity of it in the ſubſtance; yet when it comes to practice, it cannot be done without procuring mens hatred and oppoſition; and laying us open to much incommodity; and therefore *ſelf* doth perſwade us to forbear; and whether God or *ſelf* have the more ſervants even yet in a reformed Miniſtry, I leave you to judge as your obſervation of the congregations through the land ſhall direct you. But were it not for *ſelf* I ſhould undertake to do more for diſcipline and perſonal Inſtruction with moſt Miniſters by one Argument, then I have done by a volume, and

you

you might ſoon ſee an unanimous concurrence in the work, and conſequently a great alteration in the Churches.

5. And whence is it but from *ſelfiſhneſs* that plain and cloſe Application in our Sermons is taken to be an injury to thoſe that think themſelves concerned in it? If a Miniſter will ſpeak alike to all, and take heed of medling with their ſores, they will patiently hear him: but if he make them know that he meaneth *them* in particular, and deal cloſely with them about their miſerable ſtate or againſt any ſpecial diſgraceful ſin, they fal a railing at him, and reproaching him behind his back, and perhaps they will ſay, They'le hear him no more. O ſaith the *ſelfiſh* ungodly wretch, [*I know he meant me to day: had he no body but me to ſpeak againſt?*] As if a ſick man ſhould be angry with the Phyſitian, for giving directions and medicines to him in particular, and ſay, [*Had he no body to give Phyſick to but me? Were there not ſick men enough in the Town beſide me?*] When Chriſt told the Deſpiſers of the Goſpel of the certain and dreadful deſtruction that was neer them, *Mat.* 21. 41, 44, 45. its ſaid that [*When the chief Prieſts and Phariſees had heard his Parables, they perceived that he ſpake of them!* (A haynous buſineſs) *and therefore they ſought to lay hands on him, but that they durſt not do it for fear of the multitude.*

6. Nay let a Miniſter preach but any ſuch doctrine as ſeems conſequentially to be againſt *Self*, and to conclude hardly of them, and they are ready to ſay as *Ahab* of *Micaiah* [*I hate him; for he propheeyeth not good of me, but evil,*] 1 *Kings* 22.8. Let us but tell them how few will be ſaved; what holineſs and ſtriving and diligence is neceſſary, though we have the expreſs word of God for it, *Heb.* 12. 14. *Mat.* 7. 13, 14. *Luke* 13. 24. 2 *Pet.* 1. 10. yet becauſe they think that it makes againſt their carnall peace, they cannot abide it: Plain truth is unwelcome to them, becauſe it is rough, and grates upon the quick, and tells them of that which is troubleſome to know: Though they *muſt* know their ſin and danger and miſery, or elſe they can never ſcape it; yet they had rather venture on hell, then bear the danger. And as a ſottiſh patient, they love that Phyſitian better that will tell them there is no danger, and let them die, then him that will tell them, *your diſeaſe is dangerous; you muſt bleed*

or vomit, or purg, or you will die] O what a wrong they take it to be told thus? If a Miniſter tell one of them that hath the death marks of ungodlineſs in the face of his Converſation [*Neighbour, I muſt deal plainly with you; your ſtate is ſad: you are unſanctified and unjuſtified, and in the ſlavery of the Devil, and will be loſt for ever, if you die before you are converted and made a new creature; and therefore turn preſently as you love your ſoul,*] its ten to one but he ſhould have a reproachfull anſwer inſtead of thanks and obedience. And all this ſhews that *ſelf* bears the rule. I will give one inſtance from the Goſpel, that will tell you plainly the power of *ſelf*. In *Luke* 4. 20, *&c.* you read of an excellent Sermon preached by Jeſus Chriſt himſelf, ſo that all did wonder at his gracious words: yet few were converted by it, but they fell on cavilling againſt him becauſe of his ſuppoſed Parentage and Breeding: Whereupon Chriſt telleth them that *Elias* and *Eliſha* though moſt excellent Prophets, were ſent but for the ſake of a few, and therefore it was no wonder if of all that multitude it was but a few that ſhould be converted and ſaved by him. This very doctrine ſo netled theſe wretches, that the text ſaith *ver.* 28, 29. that [*all they in the Synagogue when they heard theſe things were filled with wrath, and roſe up and thruſt him out of the City and led him to the brow of the hill whereon their City was built that they might caſt him down headlong.*] See what entertainment ſuch doctrine had even from Chriſt himſelf! As if they ſhould have ſaid, *what! are we all unconverted and ungodly, ſhall none be ſaved but a few ſuch as you!* *Self* was not able to bear this doctrine? they would have had his life for it.

7. Again, let but a Miniſter or private Chriſtian, deal cloſely with ungodly men or Hypocrites about their particular ſins, by private reproof, and ſee whether *Self* be not Lord and King in them. O how ſcurvily they will look at you? and their hearts do preſently riſe againſt you with diſpleaſure, and they meet you with diſtaſte and paſſion, and plead for their ſins, or at leaſt excuſe or extenuate them; or bethink themſelves what they may hit you in the teeth with of your own: Or if malice it ſelf can faſten nothing on you, they let fly at profeſſors, or thoſe that they think are of your mind and way: in a word, they

they ſhew you that they take it not well that you meddle with them, and let not their ſin alone, and look to your ſelves, for all that God hath expreſly commanded us, *Lev.* 19. 17. [*Thou ſhalt not hate thy brother in thy heart: thou ſhalt in any wiſe rebuke thy neighbour, and not ſuffer ſin upon him.*] And Heb. 3. 13. [*Exhort one another daily while it is called to day, leſt any be hardened by the deceitfulneſs of ſin*] So *Mat.* 18. 15, 16. Try but plain dealing with your neighbours one twelve moneth with as much prudence and love and lenity as will ſtand with faithfulneſs; and when you have done I dare leave it to your ſelves to judge, whether God or *ſelf* have the more ſervants in the world, and whether *ſelf-denyal* and Sanctification be not very rare.

8. Yet further, you ſee it is the duty of Chriſtians to admoniſh and faithfully reprove one another: but becauſe moſt men take it ill, and plain dealing will diſpleaſe and loſe a friend, how few even of profeſſors will be brought to perform it? yea of thoſe that expect a Miniſter ſhould reject the offendor, when it cannot be done till after admonition and impenitency thereupon. No, this is a troubleſome duty, and *ſelf* will not give them leave to do it.

9. Moreover: You know that Church-Government and Diſcipline is an undoubted Ordinance of Chriſt which the Church hath owned in every age; (though in the execution ſome have been negligent, and ſome injurious:) and that open ſcandalous ſins muſt have open confeſſion and repentance, that the ill effects may be hindered or healed, and the Church ſee that the perſon is capable of their communion, and that the abſolution may be open and well grounded. And yet let any man (except the truly penitent and godly) be called after a ſcandal to ſuch a neceſſary confeſſion, and how hardly are they brought to it? What cavilling ſhall you have againſt the duty? They will not believe that it is their duty; not they! And why ſo? is it becauſe it is not plainly required by God? No, but becauſe it tends (they think,) to their diſgrace; and *ſelf* is againſt it: and when you have ſhewed them ſuch reaſons for it that they cannot anſwer; yet, the ſum is, they will not believe it; or if they believe it, they will not do it. What! will they make themſelves the laughing ſtock, and talk of the Countrey? No

they

they will never do it; and it is an injury, they think, for God or man to put them upon it. God commands: and *self* forbids: God bids them, yield, leſt they periſh in impenitency: *self* bids them, not to yield leſt they ſhame themſelves before men: God perſwadeth, and *self* diſſwadeth? and which is it that moſt commonly prevails (Though to avoid the ſhame of excommunication, *self* alſo will ſome time make them yield) Did but the Magiſtrate by a penalty of ten or twenty pound upon refuſers perſwade them to this, not one of a hundred would then refuſe: but when God urgeth them with the threatning of hell, the wages of impenitency, they make little or nothing of it: as if they could eſcape it by not believing it, or ſome way or other could deal well enough with him: Judge by the performance of this one duty, Whether God or *Self* have more Diſciples.

10. Laſtly, let me inſtance in one duty more; Suppoſe a deceitfull tradeſman, or oppreſſing Land-lord, or any one that gets unlawfully from another, is told from the word of God, that it is his duty to make Reſtitution, either to the perſon, or to his poſterity, (or to God by the poor, if neither can be done;) and to give back all that ever he thus unjuſtly came by, though he have been poſſeſſed of it (without diſgrace) never ſo long: See what entertainment this doctrine will have with the moſt. *Self* will not loſe the prey that it hath got hold off, till death ſhall wring it out of its jaws, and Hell make them wiſh they had never medled with it, or elſe had penitently and voluntarily reſtored it. O what abundance of objections hath *self* againſt it! and no anſwer will ſatisfie from God or man. Of a thouſand unjuſt getters, how many do reſtore, and ſay as *Zachaus* Luke 19. 8. [*Behold Lord, the half of my goods, I give to the poor; and if I have taken any thing from any man by falſe accuſation, I reſtore him four fold.*

Nay let us inſtance in a duty of leſſer *ſelf-denyal*, then this of Reſtitution. If two do but fall out, and one give railing words to the other; or if one ſlander his neighbour and do him wrong; though it be undoubtedly the will of Chriſt that he penitently ask him forgiveneſs that he hath wronged, *Luke* 17. 34. yet proud-hearted *ſelfiſh* men will refuſe it? What! will

will they ſtoop to ſuch a fellow, and ask him forgiveneſs (ſpecially if it be their inferior?) No, they ſcorn it: never talk to them of it more: they will never do it: And why ſo? would not God have them do it? Hath not he ſaid, *He that humbleth himſelf ſhall be exalted?* Yea, but what tell you them what God ſaith, and what Scripture ſaith, as long as *ſelf*, and *fleſh*, and *pride* are againſt it. Judge now by theſe ten duties that I have named, whether *God* or *ſelf* be King with moſt.

Chap. VII.

Mens exceeding tenderneſs of Self in caſe of any ſuffering.

4. ANother Diſcovering inſtance of the Dominion of *ſelf*, and the ſcarcity of *ſelf-denyal*, is, *The exceeding tenderneſs of our ſelves in any caſe of ſuffering*, and the great matter that we make of it, and our diſpleaſure againſt all that are the cauſes of it, be it never ſo juſt. I ſhall here alſo give you ſome more particular inſtances.

1. When did you ever ſee an offender (at leaſt very few) that Juſtified the Judge, and heartily confeſſeth that his puniſhment is due (unleſs ſome few at the Gallows, when the ſight of death takes down their pride?) But at moſt every one that ſuffereth for his fault doth repine at it, and at them that cauſed it, and think they have wrong, or are hardly dealt with. If all the Swearers, Curſers, Prophaners of the Lords day, Drunkards, or Ale-ſellers that reſet them, or are otherwiſe guilty, were accuſed by their Neighbours, and puniſhed by the Magiſtrate but according to the Law, how many of all theſe is there that would not be diſpleaſed with the accuſers, and with the Magiſtrate, and think himſelf wronged, and bear them a grudge in his mind that did it? And why ſo? Is it not juſt, and according to the Laws of God and man? Muſt we make a ſtir in chooſing Parliament men? and muſt they ſit there moneth after moneth, and uſe their utmoſt skill and diligence to make ſuch Laws as are neceſſary for the common good? and when all is done, muſt not theſe Laws be executed? why then it were better

spare the Parliament men the labour of sitting about them, and our selves the trouble of chooſing us Parliament men, then do all this for nothing. What is every Ale-seller, or Drunkard, or Swearer, or Prophane person, wiser then all the Parliament and the Prince? or are they all better, and juster, and honester then they? No; but its *self* that stands up against all. Its in vain to tell them of Kings, or Parliaments, or Laws, or common good, as long as you go about to croſs the *flesh*, and trouble them in their private intereſt; set but *self* against *all*, and all goes down before it as nothing. Theres's scarce a thief or murderer thats hanged, but thinks he hath hard measure; becauſe it is against *himself*.

2. Nay it is not only *penalties*, but *words* that men are very sensible of, if they be but against *themselves*. An angry or disgraceful speech, or any contempt or disrespect, doth seem a great matter against them; and they have aggravations enough to lay upon it. So tender are they of *themselves*, that you may see how little they deny *themselves*.

3. Yea Gods own Corrections do seem so heavy to them, that they murmur and are impatient under them. A little loſs or Croſs to *self* doth lie as a mountain on them. Poverty, or sickneſs, or disgrace, or troubles, do make them complain, as if they were almoſt quite undone: and all this shews how little they have learned to Deny themselves.

Chap VIII.

The partiality of mens practical judgement in their own Case.

5. ANother Discovering instance of the Dominion of *self*, is, *The strange Partiality of mens practical judgements when the Cauſe is their own; and the equity of their judgements when the Case is another mans.*

For particular instances of this, you may take up thoſe that were mentioned before. I'le give you but a few.

1. Take but a dull and backward Miniſter, (for I know you will

will expect I begin next home) and he that is most averse to particular Instruction, and Discipline, and Self-denying duties, will be content that *another* man should perform them, and will commend and extoll him for a worthy man: except he perceive that anothers diligence disgraceth his *selfishness* and negligence, and then indeed he may possibly repine at it.

2. A man that will not come near us to be instructed or Catechized, will yet let his children or servants come. Why what's the matter? doth he more regard their salvation then his own? or hath he not a soul to save or lose as well as they? and hath he not need of teaching? Yes: but they are not *himself*: If they learn a Catechism, it is no trouble to him: If their ignorance be opened, he takes it to be less dishonour to him then if he shew his own. He can yield to their submission without *self-denyal*, but not to his *Own*.

3. Take a common glutton or drunkard, that cannot forbear, but must needs have that which the flesh desires; and they can be content that *another* man be temperate and sober: and if a neighbour should have the Cup before him, as they have, or a provocation to their appetite, they could be content that they let it alone; yea they can tell them that it is the best way, and give them good counsel; and yet when the case is *their own*, it is otherwise. I have known drunkards that would perswade their children to take heed of it, and swearers that would whip their children for swearing, and persons that would not read or pray, that would be content to have their children do it. And why is all this? why that which goes by their *own* throats, must cost them *self-denyal* in the displeasing of their greedy appetites; but that which goes by the throat of another doth cost them nothing: *self* is not so much against their childrens abstinence and reformation as their own.

4. The same Magistrate that will not trouble himself and displease his neighbours, by suppessing Alehouses, and punishing vice, will perhaps be content if it were done by *another*; so that *self* might have none of the trouble and ill will.

5. Some men that will not instruct their families, nor pray with them morning and night, will confess it is well done of

others that do it. Yea some that will not be perswaded to an Holy heavenly life, will confess it is the best and wisest course, and approve of it in others, and wish they might but die in such mens case: And yet they will not themselves be brought to practice it. They will commend *Peter*, and *Paul*, and the Fathers, and the Martyrs for a holy life, and as I said, keep holy dayes for them, and yet they will not be perswaded to imitate them. And why so? why it costs them nothing to commend Holiness in others: but to practice it themselves, must cost them *self-denyal*.

6. If another man be so ingenuous as to forsake an old self-espoused opinion, which their reputation seems to lie upon, and this upon their arguing, or in conformity to their minds, they will commend his great *self-denyal* and sincerity: But yet they will not do so themselves, where the case is perhaps more clear and necessary.

7. Take a man that is never so worldly and unmerciful, that gives not to the poor any considerable part of his estate, nor doth nothing worth the mentioning for the Church, and yet this man will consent that *another* shall be as bountiful and charitable as he will: when you can hardly screw a groat out of his purse, he will be content if *another* will give an hundred. And he will commend the liberal, and speak well of them, when he will not imitate them. And why is this? why it *costeth him nothing* for another to be liberal; and therefore he can advise it, or consent to it without self-denyal: but *self* is against it when he should do it *himself*.

8. Take the most *selfish* unsanctified man, that cannot love an enemy, nor forgive a debt, or a wrong, and he will yet commend it in *another*, and advise them to it, and speak well of those that will do so by *him*: And why is this? why it costeth him nothing to have another man love an *enemy*, or forgive a debt or wrong; but he cannot *himself* do it without self-denyal.

9. Those men that love not to be toucht themselves by the Ministers application, can yet endure well enough that *others* be dealt as sharply with as may be; And they are glad to hear any sharply reproved whose sins they do dislike. The Covetous man

man loves to hear us reprove the drunkard, and the drunkard is content to have the Covetous reprehended: Erroneous professors, dividers and hypocrites do hate the Minister that reprehendeth their own sin, and can scarce endure to hear him, but say, he is bitter, or a persecuter, or raileth at the godly (alas that wickedness should have so impudent a plea!) But they can freely give us leave to deal as plainly as we will with the openly prophane: scarce any sect can endure you to speak against their own mistakes: but you may speak as freely against the *contrary-minded* as you please. How easily can Papists endure one to speak against Protestants? or Anabaptists endure one to speak against Infant-baptism? And the openly prophane can well enough endure to have Sects, and Schismaticks, and Hereticks reproved: And why is all this, but from the Dominion of *self*, and the scarcity of *self-denyal* in the world? To have another rebuked, toucheth not *Self*, and therefore may be born.

The poor man loves to hear us preach against the Vices of the rich, and to reprehend the luxury of Gentlemen, and the cruelty of oppressors: The subject too often loves to hear the Rulers faults laid open: The Countryman loves to hear the Courtyers, the Ministers, but specially the Lawyers faults laid open: Here you may speak freely: but *Self* must be let alone, upon pain of their displeasure, and many a reproach.

10. So also in case of personal close reproof: those that cannot endure it themselves, do think it the duty of others to endure it, and expect that others should submit to them; and if any will say, [Neighbour, I thank you for your plain and friendly dealing, and having so much compassion on my soul, as to help to save me from my sins: I confess I am a vile unworthy sinner; but by the grace of God I will do so no more: or if I be any more overtaken, I pray you tell me of it, and let me not alone in it.] I say if another should answer them thus, and thank them for their reproof, they would think the better of him, and take it well. But yet they will not do so themselves: for it costeth *Self* nothing to have another submit and humble *himself*.

So those that are most backward to the admonishing of

others, lest they lose their love, can like to have a Minister or another do it: For that doth not put them to deny themselves.

12. Nay take a scandalous professor, that is drawn to publike Confession as a Bear to the Stake, and if it were *another mans case*, he would think it but reasonable and meet, and would perswade him to it. If another had committed the same sin against God as he hath done, or had slandered, or wronged him, and would freely, without urging, confess in the Congregation with tears in his eyes, that he hath sinfully provoked God, and offended the Church, and wronged his Brother, and laid a stumbling block in the way of the ungodly, and the weak, and dishonoured his holy profession, and is never able to make satisfaction for such heinous sins, and is unworthy any more to be a member of the Church, and to have any Commmunion with Christ or them; and should earnestly intreat them to pardon him, and pray for him, and retain him in their Communion, and intreat God to pardon him; Would not the stander by think this were well done, and a better way to his recovery then to refuse it? And all is, because that *Self* is not touched in another mans case; unless he apprehend it like to become his own; and then he may be against it, and scorn at this, as too precise a Course.

13. Take also the extortioner, or any man that hath defrauded or injured another; and that will not be perswaded to make Restitution of all that he hath got amiss: and let this man hear of the case of *Zachem*, and he will say, It was well done: Or let anothers case be propounded to him, and he can tell them that [*Restitution is the safest way: whatever it cost you, its fit that every man should have his own.*] *Self* will give him free leave to consent to another mans Restitution; but not to his own.

14. Moreover; Suppose that persecution were afoot, and a man must either knowingly sin against God, or lose his Estate, and part with all that he hath in the world, and burn at a Stake for the cause of Christ; The *selfish* unsanctified person will not be perswaded that this is his duty, or at least, he will not be perswaded to submit to it: He cannot suffer, nor burn: He will trust God with his soul, rather then men with his body; (as such

such speak that despise God, and reject him, and prefer the world before him, and call this *trusting* him.) But if this were *another* mans case, they could tell him that its better displease men then God, and that its better venture a short life, then an endless life; and that it is little profit to win all the world, and lose his own soul; and that it is the wisest way to make sure work for eternity, and not to venture on endless misery: And they could consent that another should rather suffer then sin: Why else do they commend the Martyrs for it? And what is the reason of this strange partiality? Why *Self* is the great Ruler, and God hath but the name. *Self* is partial in their *own* cause, but not in another mans: and therefore they can consent to his suffering without *self-denial*: And hence comes the difference.

15. Moreover, when Offendors murmur at their punishment, ask but the standers by, and they are of another mind. When the Ale-seller thinks he is wronged if he be put down: ask but the poor women whose Husbands use to be drunk there, and whose children lack meat, and drink, and clothes, because the Alehouse devours that which should buy them, and they will be quite of another judgement, and think you love not God nor the Countrey, if you will not suppress them.

16. Also when you hear men extenuating their sin, and excusing it; put but the case as another mans, and let them not understand that it is their own, and you shall hear another judgement. So *Nathan* came about *David*, and put but a far lower case as another about the robbing a poor man of his only Sheep, and he could presently say and swear, [*As the Lord liveth, the man that hath done this thing shall surely die, because he had no pity:*] and his anger was greatly kindled against the man, 2 *Sam.* 12. 5, 6. But why was he not as angry with himself for a greater sin? O *self* had got the better in that grievous fall, till grace broke his heart by true repentance. So when *Judah* heard of *Thamars* fornication, he commandeth [*Bring her out that she may be burnt,*] Gen. 38. 24. But when he understood that it was by *himself*, the case was altered.

17. Let a man that is provoked by injuries and ill words, have as bad by *himself* done or spoken against another, and he can make but a small matter of them, or think they should be easily

easily put up or pardoned: when yet the same-words spoken against him, do seem intolerable.

18. Let a man speak with others in poverty, sickness, or any affliction, and what good counsel can he give him to submit to God, and take all patiently! But let the suffering be his own, and he cannot take the counsel that he gives.

19. Nay more; men are not only partial for *themselves*, but for any that are *neer themselves*, or that *self* is related to. Let another mans Son or Servant do evil, and you can be content that he be rebuked or corrected: But if it be a Son, or Kinsman, or Servant of your *Own*, the case is altered; its then a wrong to punish him, because of his relation to *you*. Let a Stranger do amiss, and you can give way to Justice: But if the Drunkard, or Ale-seller, or Swearer be your *friend*, then he must be born with and forgiven, and the Justice must be intreated for him.

Let a scandalous, or insufficient Minister, or School-master be offered to any place: If he be a Stranger, you can be content that he be rejected: but if he be a Kinsman, or Child, or Friend of *yours*, what an alteration doth this make in the case! then he must be born with, or tried, and you hope he will mend, and his faults are made the least of, and his vertues more then indeed they are.

Nay any man that doth but love *your selves* and honour *you*, and think highly of *you*, shall have a favourabler construction for all his words, and actions, and intentions, then one that you imagine is against you, or hath low thoughts of you, or is against your interest, or your opinion.

Sirs, I have run into abundance of instances, but not a quarter so many as might be given; and all is to meet with the turnings and windings of this Serpent *self*, and to let you see, (if light it self can make you see, against the blinding power of *self*) how rare *self-denial* is in the world, and what a large Dominion *self* obtaineth.

I would here have added some more Discoveries, as 6. From the excessive care, and cost, and labour that almost all the world is at for *self*; and the little they are at for God, or the good of others. 7. The large proportion that is expended on *self*, in comparison

comparison of God and others. 8. The Zeal of men to vindicate *self*, but the little Zeal for God or others. 9. The rigorous Laws that are made in the cause of *self*: (Thieves and Traitors must die): and the remissness of Law-givers in the cause of God: Blasphemy, Malignity, and Impiety is not so roughly handled. 10. The firmness of men to carnal *self*, and their great mutability and unfaithfulness to God. But I had rather omit somewhat, then to be too tedious, and therefore I go no further in these Discoveries, save only to add a few of those Aggravations that shew you the *extent* of *selfs* Dominion, as you have seen the sad discoveries of the reality of it.

Chap. IX.

The great Power and Prevalency of selfishness discovered.

And that you may see what cause we have for our Lamentation: Consider the greatness of selfish Tyranny in these Particulars.

1. Consider what a Power it is that *self* beareth down in the world: The Commands of the God of heaven are overcome by it. The Promises of eternal life are trod under foot by it. The threatnings of endless torments are nothing to it. It casts by Heaven: it ventures upon Hell: It tramples upon the precious blood of Christ: It will not hear the voice of wisdom it self: Nor the voice of goodness and mercy it self: It refuseth him that speaks from Heaven: Love it self is not lovely where *self* is Judge: It quencheth all the motions of the Spirit: it despiseth Ministers: It turneth mercies into wantonness and sin: Like *Sampson*, it breaks all bonds that are laid on it; and till it be weakned it self, there is no holding, no ruling, no saving the soul, that's ruled by it.

2. Consider also the exceeding Number of its Subjects: Truly if there were no other proof, that the sanctified and the saved are very few, this one is so full and sad a proof, that it tempteth me sometime to think them much fewer then willingly I would do, Alas, how few *self-denying* persons do you meet with in the

world! yea in the Church! yea among the stricter Professors! Look over all the world, and see how few you can find at work for any one but for *carnal self*? If you observe the Courts, and see whose work is done most there; and look into the Armies of the world, and see who it is that ruleth there: if you look upon the affairs of Nations, and the wars of Princes, and their confederacies, and see who it is that rules in all; how little will you see (save here and there) but *carnal self?* It is *self* that makes the cause and manageth it: It is *self* that maketh Wars and Peace. Come down into our Courts of Justice, and whose voice is loudest at the bar, but *selfs?* and who is it commonly else that brings in the Verdict? at least who is it else that made and followeth on the quarrel? How many causes hath *self* at an Assize, for one that God hath? Come lower into the Countrey, and who is it that ploughs and sows, who is it that keeps House or Shop but *self?* I mean what else but carnal self is the Principle? what else but carnal *self* is the End? what else but the will of *self* is the Rule? and what else but *selfish* commodity, or pleasure, or honour are the matter, or some provision that is made for these; and consequently what else but *self-respect* is the form? For the End informeth the means as means; and therefore all that is done for *self* is *self-service* and *self-seeking*. In a word, as God is *all in all* to the sanctified, so *self* is as *all* in *all* to the ungodly. And alas how great a number are all these!

3. Consider that it is a sin that is *neerer* us objectively then any other sin: And the neerer the more dangerous! Alas that a man should turn his own substance into poison, & feed upon it to his own destruction! If you have drunk poyson, you may cast it up again, or nature may do much to work it out: but if your own blood, and humors, and spirits be turned into venom, that should nourish and preserve your life, what then shall expell this venom, and deliver you?

4. Moreover it is the most *obstinate* disease in the world. No duty harder (except the Love of God) then *self-denial*. O how many wounds will *self* carry away, and yet keep life, and heal them all. How commonly do we convince some carnal Gentlemen, that *One thing is needful*, and that its a better part then Earth, and honour, and sensuality that must be chosen, or else they

they are undone; and that the more they *have*, the more they must forsake, and the more *self-denial* is required to their salvation; and that all their lands, and wealth, and honors, and all their wit, and parts, and interest must be at the service of their Maker and Redeemer; and that when they have *all* in the world that they can get, that *all* must become Nothing, and God must become all; their treasure must become the dross and dung, and Christ must become their treasure, or they are lost? I say, how oft do we convince men of all estates of these important evident truths? And yet this *self* is still alive, and keeps the garrison of the heart; and all that we can have from most of them, is, as the rich man, *Luk.* 18. 23, 24. to be *very sorrowful* that they cannot have heaven at easier rates, and that Christ will not be a servant unto *Self*, or they cannot have two Masters! They *go away sorrowful* (but away they go) *because they are rich*; which makes Christ say upon this observation, *How hardly shall they that have riches enter into the Kingdom of God?* But when the Disciples were troubled at his observation, he lets them know that it is *Self* and not *Riches* that is indeed the deadly enemy. It is the *selfish* that *trust* in Riches, and love and use them for *themselves*, and deny not *themselves*, and devote not all to God, that will be kept out of Heaven by them; Or in Christs own words, *Luk.* 12. It is [*he that layeth up treasure for Himself, and is not rich towards God.*] Conquer self and Conquer all.

5. Moreover *self* is the most *constant* malady; the sin that doth most *constantly* attend us. Many actual sins may be laid by, and we may for the time be free from them. But *selfishness* is at the heart, and lives with us continually; It parteth not from us sleeping or waking: It goes to the worship of God with us: it will not stay behind in the holyest ordinance: It will not forbear intermixing it self in the purest duties; but will defile them all. So that above all sins in the world, its this that must have the strictest, constantest watch, or else we shall never have any peace for it.

6. Yea this *self* doth lamentably survive even in the sanctified soul, among the special graces of the Spirit, and lamentably distempereth the hearts and lives of too many of the godly

themselves. Not that any godly man is *selfish* in a predominant sense; or that *self* is higher or more powerful in his heart then God: for that's a contradiction: such a man *cannot* be a godly man (without Conversion:) But yet the very remnants of conquered *Self*, what a smoak do they make in our Assemblies, and what noisom scent in the lives of many godly men? what a stir have we sometime with those that we hope are godly, before we can get them to an impartial judgement; to lament their own fowl words, or other miscarriages, and to humble themselves, or freely to forgive another that hath wronged them! especially to confess disgraceful sins in any self-denying manner? How close stick they to their own conceits? how lamentably do they improve them, to the contempt of Ministers, and trouble and division of the Church? How wise are they in their own eyes, and how hardly yield they to any advise that crosseth *Self*? How hardly are they brought to any dear and costly duty? How much do they indulge their appetites and passions? and how cheap a Religion do many think to come to heaven with? we can scarce please some of them, they are so *selfish*: either because we cross them in their opinions, or in their waies; or because we allow them not so much special countenance and respect as *self* would have: or deny them somewhat which *self* desires. If they have any use for us, if we leave not more publick or greater work which God hath set us on, and allow them not that part in our time or labours, or other helps, which God and Conscience will not allow them, they are offended and take it ill, that *self* is not preferred before God and the publick service. Their *selves* are so dear to *themselves*, that they think we should neglect all to serve them.

Let the most useful Minister live in a place that hath the plague, or other contagious mortal sickness; and most that are visited, will take it ill if the Minister come not to them, though they know that his life is hazarded by it, and that his loss to the whole Church is more to be regarded then the content or benefit of particular persons; and it is not the pleasing of them, nor their benefit by him then, that will countervail the Churches loss of him. What is this but too much preferring *self* (I hope not habitually, but) in that act, before the Church and honour of God?

Let

Let a Miniſter or any other man reſolve to beſtow all that God hath given him for his ſervice, on the poor, or pious uſes: Perhaps he ſhall diſpleaſe as many as he pleaſeth, becauſe he hath not enough for all; and if he give to nineteen, the twentieth will ſay [He paſt by me; and I am never the better.] And thus this inſatiable, unreaſonable *ſelf* will hardly be pleaſed; And among the godly how much doth it prevail! O how many Miniſters in *England* can tell by ſad experience, how much of *ſelf* ſurviveth in Profeſſors! ſo much that we can hardly rule them, or keep them from breaking all to pieces, and every man running a way of his own. The ruine of *England*'s expected Reformation; the fall of our hopes in too great a meaſure; the multiplying of ſects: the ſwarms of errors: the rage againſt the faithfulleſt Miniſters: the neglect of Diſcipline, and obſtinate refuſal of penitent confeſſions, and humbling, ſelf-denying duties: the backwardneſs to learn: the forwardneſs to be teachers; the high eſteem of weak parts, and weaker grace: the commonneſs of backbiting, cenſuring, and ſlandering, eſpecially thoſe that are not of their fond opinions: the riſing deſigns of many: the tenderneſs of their reputations: the contendings for preheminence, all theſe, with many others, do too loudly tell the world how much of *ſelf*, and how little ſelf-denial is in many that ſeem godly.

7. But yet this is not the higheſt diſcovery of the power of *Carnal ſelf*. Though its ſad to think that it ſhould be ſo potent in any that have grace: yet its ſadder to think, that it hath too much Power in the wiſeſt and moſt learned Magiſtrates and Miniſters, that ſhould be the greateſt enemies of it in the reſt. A Magiſtrate, as a Magiſtrate, is for the common good. Political ſocieties conſiſting of Soveraign and Subject, are therefore called *Commonwealths*, from the final Cauſe, which is the common good, or weal of all: ſo that it is eſſential to a Magiſtrate to be for the common good. And yet *ſelf* creeps in, and makes ſuch work with many of them, that its hard to judge whether it have left them the eſſence of the Magiſtracy, and whether they ſhould be called Magiſtrates or no.

But yet its ſadder, that the Learned, Godly Preachers of *ſelf-denial* ſhould have ſo little of it, as too many have. Alas, that

Ministers do not remember how ill Christ took the first contendings among his Disciples, who should be the greatest; that they do not imprint upon their minds the image of Christ setting a child before them, and after girding himself, and washing their feet. I think those men that make a Sacrament of this, do err much less then those that forget it. And I suspect that our contrariety to this example, will tempt some ere long into this contrary extream, and it may be set up as a Sacrament indeed. O woful case! to be daily lamented by all the compassionate members of the Church: that the Learned, Zealous Pastors of it, are the leaders, fomenters, and continuers of her divisions; and when they have opportunity to seek for healing, they want a will; and so much of *self* surviveth in them, that though God call to them for Peace and Unity, and the bleeding Church is begging it of them on her knees; yet self hath such power over them, that God is not heard, and the Church cannot be regarded; but Peace, and Piety, and all must be sacrificed to the Will and Interest of *self*: As if they were the Priests of *self*, and the honour of God, and Peace of the Church were the daily sacrifice which they have to offer! Not a motion can be made for Reformation or Unity, but some *selfish* Ministers rise up to strangle it, under pretence of mending the terms. Not a consultation can be held, but *self* creeps in, yea openly appears, and ravels the work, and will needs be the doer of all thats done, or nothing must go on thats done against it.

O Blessed Nation, if *self-denial* were more eminent and predominant therein! O pretious Ministry, and Great, and Honourable, if we truly sought our honour in the habit of children, and by being the servants of all! O happy Churches, abounding in Holiness and Peace, if once the Pastors and People were better skilled in the practice of *self-denial!* I must confess, to the praise of Gods grace, many such Ministers and people I have had the happiness to converse with! and how sweet the fruit hath been both to them and me, both they and I are ready to confess. But one *self-seeking*, unmortified Minister, is enough to disturb a whole society, and break the good endeavours of many: And alas how many such are abroad, that talk of almost nothing but their opinions, or parties, or carnal interests; and

are

are not in the harveſt as Reapers to gather, but as wild beaſts that are broken in to make ſpoil, or *Sampſons* Foxes to ſet all on fire; running up and down from Country to Country with fire-brands at their tails, and ſtings in their mouths, which they call by the reverend name of Zeal.

But you may think I have been long in diſcoveries, aggravations, and complaints; and therefore I will go no further in that ſort of work, but only to adjoyn theſe three or four practical conſectaries following.

Chap. X.

Some weighty Conſectaries.

Conſect. 1. SO common and Potent is *ſelfiſhneſs* in the world, that its enough to convince a rational Conſiderate man, of the truth of the doctrine of the fall of man, and of Original corruption, againſt all the objections that all the *Socinians* or *Pelagians* in the world do make againſt it. He that thinks that God made man in this diſtempered, diſtracted ſtate that *ſelfiſhneſs* doth hold the world in, hath unreaſonable thoughts of the workmanſhip of God. He that ſeeth even children before they can ſpeak or go ſo ſelfiſh as they are, & all mankind without exception to be naturally as ſo many Idol-gods in the world, and can believe that this is the Image of God, in which they were created, doth make the Image of Satan to be the Image of God: No wiſer, no better is the doctrine that denieth Original ſin, when *ſelf* hath ſuch a tyrannical, univerſal raign in all the world.

Conſect. 2. So deep rooted, and powerful, and univerſal is this abominable vice, that it muſt teach us what to expect in all places we live in, and may help us to make the trueſt Prognoſticks, or probableſt conjectures of any mutations where the will of man is like to be the determiner. Know once but where *ſelf-intereſt* lies, and you may know what almoſt all men will endeavour, and might write a probable Prognoſtication of the changes

changes that are like to be in States, and Kingdoms, and anywhere in the world, were it not for the interpoſition of two greater Powers that have got the victory of *ſelf*, and that is *Grace*, and *Divine-over-ruling Providence.* I ſay were it not that theſe ſtep in, and croſs *ſelf*, and hinder its deſigns, you might fore-ſee in *ſelf-intereſt* the changes that are made in humane affairs.

Conſect. 3. And ſo Potent and common is the Dominion of *ſelf*, that it may warrant an honeſt, moderate incredulity and jealouſie of almoſt all men, in caſes where the intereſt of ſelf is much concerned. Let him be never ſo ingenuous, let his parts and profeſſion be never ſo promiſing, let his former engagements to you be never ſo great, let him be your own Brother; yet be not too confident of him, if his carnal *ſelf* be concerned or engaged againſt you. For you ſhall ſee by experience, as long as you live, that *ſelf* will ſtill bear Dominion in the moſt.

Conſect. 4. Above all, every wiſe and godly man ſhould herein maintain the greateſt Jealouſie of his own heart: Keep the heart above all keepings; and keep out *ſelf*, above all ſins whatever: Take heed of *ſelfiſhneſs*, as ever you would *be* Chriſtians, and *live* as Chriſtians, and have the Peace of Chriſtians. And to that end be always ſuſpicious of every cauſe, opinion, controverſie, or practiſe, where ſelf is much concerned. The very names of SELF and OWN ſhould ſound in a watchful Chriſtians ears as very terrible, wakening words, that are next to the names of *Sin* and *Satan*; and at leaſt carry in them much cauſe of ſuſpition.

Prov. 4. 23.

And this hath led me up to the next Uſe of the Point.

CHAP.

Chap. XI.

Use 2. *To try our self-denial: the sincerity of the least degree.*

Use 2. *Of Exhortation.*

BEloved hearers, I have now before me as great a sin and danger to deterr you from (even selfishness and its effects) and as great a Duty to offer to your entertainment (even *self-denial*) as any (save one) that I am acquainted with in the world. The raising up the soul to God is indeed the greatest work: But the mortifying of the flesh, and the Denying of self, is surely the next to it, being a real part of the change. You hear Ministers tell you of the odiousness, and danger, and sad effects of sin: but of all the sins that ever you heard of, there is scarce any more odious and dangerous then this; and yet I doubt there are many that never were much troubled at it, nor sensible of its malignity. My principal request therefore to you is, that as ever you would prove Christians indeed, and be saved from sin and damnation that follows it; take heed of this deadly sin of *selfishness*, and be sure you be possessed with true self-denial: and if you have it, see that you use and live upon it.

And for your help herein, I shall 1. Tell you how your *self-denial* must he tried; and 2. How it must be exercised; and 3. I shall give you some further Reasons to perswade you to it; p. 285. and 4. Some Directions for the procuring and strengthening it. p. 325.

1. The trial of your *self-denial* may be performed by the help of the Signs that have been given you before. In the ten particulars mentioned in the beginning, you may see what is *selfishness*, and what *is self-denial*. But for your further satisfaction, I shall only tell you in a few words, how the least measure of true *self-denial* may be known. And, in one word, that is thus: *Wherever the Intereſt of Carnal self is stronger and more predominant habitually then the Intereſt of God, of Christ, of everlasting life, there is no true self-denial or saving grace: But*

where Gods Interest is the strongest, there self-denial *is sincere.* If you further ask me How this may be known? Briefly thus.

1. What is it that you *Live* for? what is that Good which your mind is principally set to obtain? and what is that End which you principally design and endeavour to obtain, and which you set your heart on, and lay out your hopes upon? Is it the Pleasing and glorifying of God, and the everlasting fruition of him? Or is it the Pleasing of your *fleshly mind*, in the fruition of any inferiour thing? Know this, and you may know whether *Self* or God have the greatest interest in you. For that is your God, which you Love most, and Please best, and would do most for.

2. Which do you set most by? the Means of your Salvation, and of the Glory of God; or the Means of providing for *Self* and Flesh? Do you set more by Christ and Holiness, which are the way to God; or by Riches, Honour, and Pleasures, which gratifie the flesh? Know this, and you may know whether you have true *Self-denial?*

3. If you are truly *self-denying*, you are ordinarily Ruled by God, and his Word and Spirit, and not by Carnal *Self*. Which is the Rule and Master of your lives? whose Word and and Will is it ordinarily that prevails? When God draws, and self draws, which do you follow in the tenor of your life? Know this, and you may know whether you have true *Self-denial.*

4. If you have true *Self-denial*, the drift of your lives is carried on in a successful opposition to *Carnal Self*, so that you not only refuse to be ruled by it, and love it as your God, but you fight against it, and tread it down as your enemy: So that you go armed against *Self* in the course of your lives, and are striving against *Self* in every duty; and as others think, it then goes best with them, when *Self* is highest, and pleased best; so you will know that it then goeth best with you, when *Self* is lowest, and most effectually subdued.

5. If you have true *Self-denial*, there is nothing in this world so dear to you, but on deliberation you would leave it for God. He that hath any thing which he loveth so well that he cannot spare it for God, is a *selfish* and unsanctified wretch. And therefore God hath still put men to it, in the trial of their sincerity,

rity, to part with that which was dearest to the flesh. *Abraham* must be tried by parting with his only Son. And Christ makes it his standing rule, [*He that forsaketh not all that he hath, cannot be my Disciple*] *Luke* 14.33. Yet it is true that flesh and blood may make much resistance in a gracious heart; and many a striving thought there may be, before with *Abraham* we can part with a Son, or before we can part with wealth or life: But yet on deliberation, self-denial will prevail, and there is nothing so dear to a gracious soul, which he cannot spare at the will of God, and the hope of everlasting life. If with *Peter* we should flinch in a temptation, we should return with *Peter* in weeping bitterly, and give Christ those lives that in a temptation we denied him. For Habitually God is dearest to the soul.

6. In a word, true self-denial is procured by the *Knowledge and Love of God*, advancing *him* in the soul, to the debasing of *self*. The illuminated Soul is so much taken with the Glory and Goodness of the Lord, that it carrieth him out of *himself* to God, and as it were estrangeth him from *himself*, that he may have communion with God; and this makes him vile in his own eyes, and abhor *himself* in dust and ashes; He is lost in *himself*; and seeking God, he finds *himself* again in God. It is not a Stoical Resolution, but the Love of God and the Hopes of Glory that make him throw away the world, and look contemptuously on all below, so far as they are meer provision for the flesh.

Search now, and try your hearts by these evidences, whether you are possessed of this necessary grace of *self-denial*. O make not light of the matter Sirs, and presume not of it, till you find good grounds. For I must tell you, that *self* is the most treacherous enemy, and the most insinuating deceiver in the world: It will be within you when you are not aware of it, and will conquer you when you perceive not your selves much troubled with it, and of all other vices is both the hardest to *find* out, and the hardest to *cast* out; the hardest to discover, and the hardest to cure. Be sure therefore in the first place that you *have self-denial*: and then be sure that you use it and live in the practice of it. And for this I must give you more particular advice.

Chap XII.

In what respect self must be denyed.

11. And here I beseech you take heed of *Self* in all these following respects. 1. You must Deny *self* as it is Opposite to God, and a Competitor with him, and the Idol of the soul and of the world; and this is in all the *ten* respects which I mentioned in the beginning, and therefore shall not now rehearse. And this is the principal part of *self-denyal.*

2. *Self* must be denyed as it is but conceived as *separated* from God; and would be an End in a divided sense from God. For *our selves* and all things else are created contingent, dependent beings, and must not be once thought of as if we were either our own beginning, or end, or in any capacity, but subservient unto God. *Self* becomes a *Satan,* when it would cast off its due subordination to God, and would be any other then the workmanship of God, depending on him, and ruled by him, and living to him, loving him, desiring him, and seeking after him, and either mourning when we miss him, or rejoycing when we find Communion with him.

3. *Self* must be *denyed* as it stands up against the *Truth* of the *Gospel,* and blindly and proudly quarrelleth with that word which faith relyeth upon for Justification and Salvation. *Carnal self* is both the most incompetent Judge of the word of God, and of spiritual affairs, and also the most forward, and arrogant, and audacious, for all it is so incompetent. And this is the damnable fountain of unbelief. That *self* is an incompetent Judge of the word and waies of God, is evident: for (1.) It is a natural enemy to them, and an enemy is no compent Judge, *Rom.* 8.7. [*Because the Carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the Law of God, neither indeed can be.*] Deny therefore this enemy the power of judging the word of God. Ill-will never saith well. Enmity is credulous of all evil, and overlooks the good, and is accompanyed with false surmises, and wresteth every word, and suspecteth or maketh an evil sence where there was none: there is not a worse expositor in the

the world. And therefore no wonder if such a nature of enmity can find matter of quarrel with the very Scripture it self, and with an holy life, yea with God himself; for it is him especially that the enmity is against.

(2.) Moreover self is a party, and therefore an incompetent judge. It is self that the Scripture principally speaks against: All over the Gospel there are the words of disgrace, and the arrows of death directed against the very heart of *Carnal self*. God there proclaimeth and manageth an open warr against it. And shall a party be the judge? shall the traiterous delinquent be the Judge? A child will hardly speak well of the rod, whatever he do by the Corrector: but its not to be expected that a thief should love the halter or the gallows. Gods word is the weapon that self must be slain by; and therefore *self* is an incompetent judge of it.

(3.) Moreover *self* is quite *blind* in the matters of God: *the natural man discerneth them not, nor can do, because they are spiritually discerned*, 1 Cor. 2. 14. And the ignorant and blind are incompetent judges.

(4.) And the *selfish* man is no good *student* in the Laws of God; even when he readeth the *letter*, he doth not mind or savour the spirit of them. Rom. 8. 5. [*For they that are after the flesh, do mind the things of the flesh: but they that are after the spirit, the things of the spirit.*] A fair world it would be, if every Colliar should Judge the privy Council and the Judges of the Land! or if every thief should sit upon his accuser and his Judge, and every traitor should Judge the Prince. And a thousand-fold more insufficient is *self* to judge the Word of God.

And yet as insufficient as it is, it is exceeding arrogant, and steps up into the judgement seat, at every Chapter that is read or heard: and if this blind and malitious Judge be unsatisfied, forsooth the Scripture must be dark or contradictory, or what he pleases. This horrible presumptuous arrogancy of *self* is it that hath opened so many mouths against the blessed doctrine of salvation, and made so many wretched Apostates in the world, and cast so many others into doubtings of that word by which at last they must be judged, and which should

have been the ground of their faith and hope.

4. Moreover, *self* must be denyed as it stands up against the Lord Jesus Christ. When Christ is presented in his wonderful Condescention, in his incarnation, and mean despised life, and in his ignominious death, Proud *self* is offended at so low a Saviour, and disdaineth that Humiliation which his own necessities did require, and despiseth Christ because he became despised and a man of sorrows in our stead. When he is propounded as the remedy of a miserable soul, and as our only Life, and Righteousness, and Hope, *Self* doth seduce the soul to undervalue him: It will not easily be convince of so much misery as to need such a remedy: it is too *well* to value such a Physitian: it is too righteous to value the righteousness of a Mediator. It hath too much Life and Hope at home, in its own supposed innocency or sufficiency, to set much by the Hopes that Christ hath purchased, and to Live in him.

O down with *self* that Christ may be Christ to you. How shall he come in, while *Self* is the Porter that keeps the door? How shall he pardon you, when *Self* will not suffer you to feel the want and worth of pardon? How shall he bind up your hearts, when Self will not suffer them to be broken? How shall he cloath you with his righteousness, while self keeps on your own defiled rotten raggs? Down therefore with self, that Christ may be exalted. Away with your own conceited righteousness, that he may be your righteousness; down with your *Selfish* foolish wisdom, that the supposed foolishness of God may be your wisdom. Level this mountain, which Satan hath built up in enmity against the holy mountain of the Lord.

5. Moreover, *Self* must be denyed as it is the great resister of the Holy Ghost. The sanctifying spirit hath no greater enemy, at least, except the Devil himself. One half of the work of sanctification, is, to destroy this Carnal self. And therefore no wonder if hence it find the chief resistance. Not an holy motion can be made to the soul but *Self* is against it. No work hath the spirit to do upon us, but *Self* is ready to gainsay it, and contradict it and work against it: when ever therefore this mortal Principle is contending against the spirit of God, dishonouring holiness, diswading you from duty, perswading you to

to sin, down with it and deny it, as you would be true to the spirit and your selves.

6. Moreover, *Self* must be denyed as it traiterously complyeth with the enemies of Christ and your own salvation: when it takes part with Satan, and pleads for sin, and saith as wicked men say, and entereth a conspiracy with all that would undo you, and all this under pretence of your own good. When ever it speaks for sin, you may be sure it speaks against God and you, and therefore its reason you should deny it. *Self* also must be denyed when it riseth up against the supposed tediousness or difficulty of duty: when it grudgeth at an holy life, and saith, [What a stir is here? what a weary life is this? what do I get by serving God?] Now *Self* is playing the traytor against God and you: and therefore Deny it.

7. Moreover, when *Self* doth rise up against sufferings, and make you believe that they are intolerable; and that it is unreasonable for a man to forsake all that he hath for fear of a sinful word or deed, when we sin every day, when we have done our best; its time now to stop the mouth of *self*; for it playes the Devils game against God and you, and would perswade you to prefer a short, uncertain, miserable life, before eternal life, and to give up your self to wilful sin, becaufe God beareth with the sins of mens infirmity. Its reason that you should deny so unreasonable an enemy to God and you.

8. Moreover, *Self* must be *denyed* when it stands up against the Ordinances of God. When it pleadeth against the arguments of the word, and findeth fault with the Law that it should obey, and quarrelleth with prayer and all holy duties, and would make all instituted means uneffectual for your saving good; its time now that you deny it.

9. When *Self* doth rise up against the *Officers* of Christ, and would make you believe that your teachers are fools, and you are wise; that they are beside the truth, and you are in the right; or that they speak against you out of malice, or singularity, or some such distemper, and so would deprive you of the saving benefit of their doctrine and office, its time now to deny self, if you know but what belongeth to your peace. And though I grant that you must not follow a teacher into a certain

sin

sin and error; yet when it is not God but *self* that riseth up against your Teachers, and possesseth you with a spirit of bitterness, disobedience, contradiction and malignity, this *self* must be denyed.

10. Lastly, as *Self* is against the good of our neighbour or humane Societies, it must be denyed. For we must love our Neighbour as our selves: that is, Both self and neighbour must be loved in a due subordination to God, as means to his Glory, and in this notion of a *means*, the Love should be equal; though there is also a Natural Love in order to self-preservation put into us by the Creator, which our Love to every Neighbour is not to equal in degree; yet our love to Societies should exceed it; and our Love to a Neighbour should come so near it, that we should *diligere proximum proxima dilectione*, love him as a second *Self*, and so study his welfare, as to promote it to our power, and not to covet or draw from him for our selves, nor do him any wrong. This is the sense of the tenth Commandement, and sum of the second Table.

Exod. 20. 17.

Chap. XIII.

1. *Selfish Dispositions must be denyed, and* 1. *Self-love.*

HAving seen in what respects and upon what accounts it is that *Self* must be denyed, I am next to tell you the particulars of that *selfish* interest that must be denyed, and the parts that are contained in this needful work.

And here you must remember what saving faith is, that seeing how *self* opposeth it, you may know wherein it must be denyed.

Saving faith is such a Belief in Christ for Reconciliation with God, and the everlasting fruition of him in Glory, as makes us forsake all the things of this world, and give up our selves to the conduct of the word and spirit, for the obtaining of it.

When a man can strip himself of all the pleasures and profits, and honours of this world, first in his estimation, and love and resolution, and then in the actual forsaking of them at the Cal-

Call of God, because of the firm belief and hope that he hath of the fruition of God in Glory, as purchased and promised by Jesus Christ; this is a Christian, a Disciple of Christ, a true believer; and none but this. And (as I have told you) as God in Unity, and Father, Son, and Holy Ghost in Trinity, is the Object of our saving faith; so *Carnal Self* in unity, and Pleasure, Profits, and Honors in trinity must be renounced and denied by all true Christians; as being that which we turn *from*, when we turn to God. So that in brief to deny *your selves*, doth Generally consist in denying all your own *Dispositions* and *Interests* whatsoever as they are against God the Father, Son or Spirit, or stand not in a due subserviency to him: And this *Interest* which you must Deny, consisteth in your Pleasures, Profits, and Honour: Of these therefore I shall speak distinctly, though but briefly.

I. You must begin at the denial and mortification of your Corrupt and *selfish Disposition*, or else you can never well *deny* your *selfish Interest* It is not enough to *keep under* this *selfishness* by denying it somewhat that it would have: but the *selfish Inclination* or *Nature* it self must be so far mortified and destroyed, that it shall not reign as formerly it did. For this which we call *selfishness*, is not your very *Persons*, nor any spiritual or right natural desire of your own good: But it is the inordinate adhering of the soul to your selves, by departing from God to whom you should adhere; and so a carrying over Gods interest and honour to your selves. Holiness is an *Inclination* and *Dedication* to God: by which two we are said to be *separated* to him. And wickedness is an Inclination, and Addictedness, or Devotedness to our selves above God, or as separated from God: And this *Inclination*, *Disposition*, or *Separation* of man to *Himself* instead of God, is it that I call *self* or *selfishness*; and this *Self* must it self be first destroyed, as to the predominant degree.

And therefore let us First observe wherein this *selfish Disposition* doth consist, which must be destroyed; and then Secondly, wherein the *selfish Interest* doth consist that must be denied. p. 108.

And first the *selfish Disposition* consisteth in these several parts that follow.

1. The principal part of it consisteth in an inordinate *Self-love*: This is a corruption so deep in the heart of man, that it may be called his very *Natural Inclination*, which therefore lieth at the bottom, below all his Actual sins whatsoever; and must be changed into a *New Nature*, which principally consists in the *Love of God*. This is Original sin it self, even the heart of it. This speaks what man by Nature *is*: even an Inordinate *self-lover*; And as he is, so he will act. In this all other vice in the world is virtually contained: even as all grace is in the *Love of God*: which made the Schoolmen say, that Love is the Form of all Grace: not as they are this or that Grace in particular; not of Faith as Faith, nor of Hope as Hope; but of Faith, Hope, &c. as vital or gracious acts: because the respect to the End is essential to the means as a means: and therefore the respect to God as the End, is Essential to Faith, Hope, &c. as a means to him: and therefore that Grace (of Love) which is terminated on the End, must have an essential participation, concurrence, or influence on those that are directly terminated on the Way or Means; and must convey somewhat of its very essence to them; and so far as they partake of that essence of Love, so far are they indeed those special Graces which carry the soul to God its End: And in this sence we may allow the distinction between *Fides*, *Spes*, &c. *formata charitate* (which is true Christian Faith and Hope,) and *Fides*, *Spes*, &c. *informis*, which is but an opinion and dream. And so it is in the body of sin: When *self-love* doth reign, it is the Heart of wickedness: And though every sin hath its own specifick nature; yet all are virtually in *self-love*, and are so far mortal, or prove men graceless, as they are informed by the essential Communication of *self-love*: For *Self* being the End, informeth all the means as they respect it. I say the more to you of this, because indeed it is a weighty truth, for the right understanding of the true nature of Grace and sin; and I doubt many are in the dark for want of understanding and considering it. A man that feareth and Loveth God, and an unsanctified man may be both overtaken with the same sin; perhaps a gross one, as *Noahs*, and *Davids* and *Peters* was: and yet this may be a mortal sin in the ungodly; I mean such as proves him in a state of death, and yet not so

so in the gracious person. The wicked will deride this in their ignorance, as if we made God partial; but its no such matter: The Papists cannot endure it, but suppose *Peter*, *David*, and *Noah*, were quite without the Love of God, and so were again unsanctified men: but this is their error. It was not from the Power of reigning *self-love*, and the Habitual absence of the Love of God, that these men (or any Saints) did sin: but from a particular act of mortified *self-love* by a surprize upon the neglect of the actual exercise of the Love of God. But all the sins of unsanctified men, or at least their common sins, are from the *Habitual reign of self-love*, and the *Habitual absence of the Love of God*: And therefore the sins of the Saints are, as the Schoolmen speak of the graces of the ungodly, *unformed*: they be not Mortal sins in the sense aforesaid, because they be not naturalized, informed, animated, by the malignity and venom of the Mortal End and Principle, which is *Habitual reigning self-love*: But those of the wicked are sins informed by this *inordinate self-love* as an habitual reigning sin; and therefore being animated by its malignity are mortal: Yet say not that this makes God partial, and not to hate the same sin in one as he doth in another. For two things must be taken in: 1. Where the heart is sanctified, such sins are strangers: perhaps *one* Godly man of *ten* or *twenty* may *be* guilty of one of them, as *Noah* was of drunkenness once in all his life (since his conversion:) For it will not stand with grace to Live in them. For such as a mans Love, and Inclination, and nature is, such will be the drift of his life. And would not you have God make a difference between those that sin *once*, and those that *live* in it.? 2. Besides, will not any honest man make a great difference of the same acts according as they come from different hearts? you will not take a passionate word from a Father, Husband, or Wife, so ill as the same word from a malicious enemy. If an unthrifty Son should spend you twenty shillings wastfully, you will not prosecute him as you would do a thief or an enemy that takes it from you violently. Wilful murder and casual man-slaughter, have not the same punishment by the Law of the Land. If you will make such a difference your selves, of the same words or deeds as they come from different meanings and affections, quarrel not

with God for doing that which you confeſs is juſt and neceſſary to be done.

1. The Faculty where this Diſpoſition is principally ſeated, is the will: which in man is the Heart of Morality, whether *Good* or *Evil.* And the Principal Act is, an Inordinate *Adheſion* of man to *himſelf*, and *Complacency* in *himſelf*: And this is the inordinate *ſelf-love* that muſt be firſt mortified.

2. The next faculty that *Self* hath corrupted, is the *underſtanding*; and here we firſt meet with the ſin of *ſelf eſteem*, which is the ſecond part of *ſelfiſhneſs* to be mortified. It is not more natural for man to be ſinful, vile, and miſerable, then to think himſelf vertuous, worthy and honourable. All men naturally over-value themſelves, and would have all others alſo over-value them. This is the ſin of Pride. But of this I muſt ſpeak by it ſelf.

Chap. XIV.

Self-conceitedneſs muſt be denied.

3. The next part of *ſelfiſhneſs* to be mortified, is in the ſame faculty, and it is called *ſelf-conceitedneſs.* And it conſiſteth of two parts: the firſt is a Diſpoſition to *ſelfiſh* opinions or conceits that are properly our own: and the ſecond is, to think better of thoſe conceits then they do deſerve.

Naturally men are prone to ſpin themſelves a web of opinions out of their own brain, and to have a Religion that may be called their *own*: And its their *Own* in two reſpects: 1. Becauſe it is of their own deviſing, and not of Gods revealing or appointing: 2. Becauſe it ſuiteth with their own carnal ends and intereſts. Men are far readier to make themſelves a faith, then to receive that which God hath formed to their hands. And they are far readier to receive a doctrine that tends to their carnal commodity, or honour, or delights, then one that tends to ſelf-denial, and to abaſe themſelves, and exalt the Lord. 2. And when they have hatched or received ſuch opinions which are peculiarly their Own, they are apt to like them the better, becauſe they

they are their own, and to value them becauſe of the Intereſt of *Self*. O Sirs, that you did but know the commonneſs and danger of *ſelf-conceitedneſs* in the world! Even with many that ſeem humble, and verily think that it is the ſpirit of God that beareth the greateſt ſway in their underſtandings, yet *ſelf* doth there erect its throne. O how ſecretly and ſubtilly will *ſelf* inſinuate, and make you believe that its a pure ſelf-denying light which guideth you, and that what I hold is meerly by the cogent evidence of truth, or the illumination of the Spirit, when it is but a Viper that *ſelf* hath hatched and doateth on, becauſe it is her *own*. Becauſe the Papiſts have gone too far in teaching men to depend on the Church and on their Teachers, therefore *ſelf-conceitedneſs* takes advantage of their error, to draw men into the contrary extream, and make every Infant-Chriſtian to think *himſelf* wiſer then his moſt experienced Brethren and Teachers; and every raw unſtudied Chriſtian to think himſelf wiſer then thoſe that have been ſearching into the word of truth by ſtudy and prayer almoſt all their days: and therefore to cry down that learning, wiſdom and ſtudy, which they are unacquainted with; that ſeeing they have it not themſelves, they may at leaſt be thought as wiſe men without it, as thoſe that have it, and ſo may provide for the reputation and intereſt of *Self*: O what ſad work hath this great ſin of *ſelf-conceitedneſs* made in the world! In too many places men make it their Religion to ſtrive who ſhall be greateſt for wiſdom and abilities in the eyes of men: and it is the very work of their Prayers, and conference, and teaching, to exerciſe *ſelf-conceitedneſs*, and to make it appear that they are ſome body in knowledge: Hence is it that they are ſo apt to fall upon novelties which either few receive, or none before themſelves deviſed, that being ſingular, *ſelf* may be the more obſerved, and they may have ſomething which may be called their Own: Hence alſo it is that they are ſo little ſuſpicious of their own opinions, never bending their ſtudies impartially to try whether they are of God or not, but rather to maintain them, and to find out all that can be ſaid for them, and againſt the contrary-minded: Hence is it that men have ſuch light and contemptuous thoughts of the judgement of thoſe that excel them in knowledge, and that the voice of *Co-*

rah, and thoſe other Conſpirators, *Numb.* 16 3. is grown ſo common in the mouths of ignorant proud profeſſors. [*Ye take too much upon you* (ſay they to their Guides and Teachers) *ſeeing all the Congregation are holy, every one of them, and the Lord is among them: wherefore then lift you up your ſelves above the Congregation of the Lord?*] It is the Holineſs of the Congregation, and all its members, and the preſence of God himſelf among them, that is pleaded againſt the ſuperiority of *Moſes* and *Aaron*, as if with ſo Holy a people, that had God himſelf to be their Teacher and Guide, there were no need of men to be *lift up above the Congregation of the Lord*. But it was *ſelf* that was *intended*, what ever was pretended. From this *ſelf-conceitedneſs* alſo it is that the weightieſt common truths that *Self* hath no ſpecial intereſt in, are ſo little valued, and reliſhed, and inſiſted on; and that a leſs and more uncertain point which *ſelf* hath eſpouſed, ſhall be more reliſhed, inſiſted on, and contended for: Hence alſo is moſt of the common confidence of men in their own Opinions; that when the point is doubtful, if not certainly falſe, in the eyes of wiſer men then themſelves, yet *the fool rageth and is confident*, Prov. 14. 16. He can carry on a conceit of his *Own* with as brazen a face, and proud contempt of other mens arguments, as if he were maintaining that the Sun is light, and other men pleaded to prove it dark: when, alas, it is *ſelf-intereſt* that is the *life*, the ſtrength, the goodneſs of the cauſe. Hence alſo it is that men are ſo quarrelſom with the words and ways of others, that they can ſcarce hear or read a word, but theſe pugnacious animals are ready to draw upon it, as if they had catcht an advantage for the honouring of their valour, and were loth to loſe ſuch a prize and opportunity for a victory and triumph: Hence it is that hiſſing at the ſayings and doings of others, is the firſt, and moſt common, and moſt ſenſible part of their commentaries. And that they can make hereſies and monſters not only of tolerable errors, but of truths themſelves; if they have but the inexpiable guilt of croſſing the wiſdom of theſe *ſelf-conceited* men. Hence it is that opinions of their own are more induſtriouſly cultivated & ſtudiouſly cheriſhed, by a double if not a tenfold proportion of Zeal and diligence, then common truths that all the godly in the world have as much intereſt in as they,

they, though the common truths be incomparably the greater. And hence it is that men that are ſo tenacious of that which is their Own, when they eaſier let go that which is Gods; and muſt have all come to them, and every man deny his own judgement, except themſelves; and that it muſt be the glory of others to yield to them, and their glory to yield to none, but to have all men come over & ſubmit to them. All theſe are the fruits and diſcoveries of *ſelf* as it reigns in mens underſtandings, who poſſibly may think that its Chriſt & the Spirit thats there exalted.

Yet miſtake me not: I do not ſay or think that a man ſhould forſake a certain truth for fear of being accounted *ſelf-conceited*, nor that he muſt preſently captivate his own underſtanding to a learneder man, or the ſtronger, or more numerous ſide, for fear of being *ſelf-conceited*. Much leſs muſt I deny that grace of God that hath made me ſavingly wiſe by his illumination, that was formerly fooliſh, diſobedient, and deceived in the days of my ignorance. The world muſt give us leave to triumph over our *own* former folly with *Paul, Tit.* 3. 3,4,5. and ſay with the ſame *Paul*, that we were no better then mad when we were enemies to the Goſpel, *Act.* 26. 11. and with the man in *Joh.* 9. 25. [*One thing I know, that whereas I was blind, now I ſee*] Its no ſelf-conceitedneſs for a man that is brought from the blind diſtracted ſtate of ſin, into the light of the ſanctified, to know that he is wiſer then he was before; and that he was formerly beſides himſelf, but now is come to his underſtanding again. Nor is it any ſelf-conceitedneſs for the meaneſt Chriſtian to know that a wicked man is more fooliſh then he; or for a Miniſter or any man that God hath cauſed to excell in knowledge, to hold faſt the truth he knows, and to ſee and modeſtly oppoſe the errors of another, and to know that in that he is wiſer then they. God doth not require that we ſhall turn to every mans opinion, and reel up and down from ſect to ſect, and be of the opinion of every party that we come among, and all for fear of thinking our ſelves wiſer then they. *David* knew *he had more underſtanding then his Teachers*: *Pſal.* 119. 98,99. and true believers fear not to ſay [*We know that we are of God, and the whole world lieth in wickedneſs*, 1 Joh. 5. 19. & 3. 19. & 2. 3. And *Paul* would not forbear the reproving of *Peter*, for fear of being

being thought to be *self-conceited*, *Gal.* 2. some men are so desperately *self-conceited* that they take every man to be *self-conceited* that is not of *their* conceits.

But when *self* is mens instructor, and chooseth their text, and furnisheth them with matter, and nothing is savoury but what is either suited to the common interest of *self*, or which it hath not a special interest in; when men are absolutely wise in their own eyes, and comparatively wiser then those that know much more then they; when *self-interest* serves instead of evidence to the receiving, retaining, or contending for a point; when men think they know that which indeed they do not know; and observe the little which they do know, more then an hundredfold more that they are ignorant of; doubtless here's *self-conceitedness* with a witness; and they that will not see it in a lower degree, me thinks should see it in such a case as this. He that will not believe that a man is drunk when he reels and stammereth, may know it when he lieth spewing in the streets.

Well Sirs, I beseech you see that *self* in the *understanding* be mortified and pulled down. Its the throne of God, the Lanthorn of holy truth, the temple of the Spirit; and shall *self* rule there? The *understanding* is it that guideth the soul and all the actions of your lives: and if *self* rule there, what a ruler will yon have? and what a case will heart and life be in? If your eye be dark, your Light be dark, how great will be your darkness: and if it be *selfish*, it is certainly so far dark. O believe the Holy Ghost, *Prov.* 26. 12. [*Seest thou a man wise in his own conceit? there is a more hope of a fool then of him.*] For a meer fool that is ignorant only for want of teaching, hath no such prejudice against the truth, as the self-conceited have: Nor is it so hard to make him know that he is ignorant: nor yet to make him willing to Learn: He that knoweth himself to be blind is willing to be led. Moreover the self-conceited have much to unlearn, before they can be fit to receive the truth in a saving manner. O how many thousands are undone by *self-conceitedness*: It is this that keeps out Knowledge, and every Grace, and consequently all true peace and comfort; and it is this that defendeth and cherisheth all sin. Let us shew men the plainest word of God for duty and against sin, and shew them the

Matth. 6. 22, 23.

the cleareſt reaſons, and yet *ſelf-conceitedneſs* bolts the door againſt all: Yea ſo wonderfully doth this ſin prevail, that the ignorant ſilly people that know almoſt nothing, are as proudly ſelf-conceited as if they were the wiſeſt men: They that will not learn, and cannot give an account of their knowledge, in the very Catechiſm or Principles of Chriſtian Religion, nor cannot pray, nor ſcarce ſpeak a word of ſenſe about the matters of ſalvation, but excuſe themſelves that they are no Scholars, yet theſe very people will proudly reſiſt their Teachers, though they were the wiſeſt and learnedſt men in the Land: Let us but croſs their conceits about any doctrine or practice in Religion; about their own title to Church-priviledges, or fitneſs for them, and they are confident and furious againſt their Miniſters, as if we were as ignorant as they, and they were the wiſeſt men in the world: ſo that pride and ſelf-conceitedneſs makes people mad, or deal like mad men. We cannot humble men for ſin, nor reclaim them from it, till they know the ſin, and the danger of it: and *ſelf-conceitedneſs* will not let them know it, no nor let them come to us to be taught: but they are wiſe enough already: and if we tell them of the ſin and danger, they are *wiſer* then to believe the Word of God or us! They will tell us to our faces, they will never believe ſuch and ſuch things, which we ſhew them in the Scripture. O the precious light that ſhineth round about you all, and would make you wiſe, if *ſelf-conceitedneſs* did not keep it out by making you ſeem wiſe already. 1 *Cor.* 3. 18. Theſe men that thus deceive themſelves, by ſeeming wiſe to themſelves, muſt become fools in their own eyes, if ever they will be truly wiſe; and confeſs themſelves, as *Paul* himſelf did, that they were fooliſh and deceived, when they ſerved their luſts and pleaſures, *Tit.* 3. 3. This *Pride* and *Self-conceitedneſs* is like the barm in the drink, that ſeems to fill up the veſſel, but indeed works it all over: This is the *Knowledge that puffeth up*, 1 Cor. 13. like the pot that by boyling ſeemeth to be filled, that was half empty before; but its empty in the botom, and preſently boils over, and is emptyer then before. So is it with the *ſelf-conceited*, that have a ſuperficial knowledge, while they are empty at the botom, and by the heat of pride, that little they have boileth over to their loſs. It is the humble that God reveals his

Luke 1. 53. ſecrets to, and the hungry that he filleth with good things, and the full that he ſendeth empty away. He will have no Diſciples that come not to his School as little Children, teachable and tractable, not thinking themſelves too old, or too wiſe, or too good to be taught. If you would ſee the myſteries of the Goſpel ſavingly, you muſt even creep to Chriſt on your knees, and cry, *Lord be merciful to me a ſinner!* He will not lift up your minds & hearts to heaven, till you think your ſelves unworthy to lift up your very eys to heaven, becauſe you have ſinned againſt heaven. And if you were even lifted to heaven, ſhould you there but be lifted up with pride or ſelf-conceitedneſs, you ſhould ſoon have a prick in the fleſh, to let out that dangerous, venemous wind that puffs you up.

And if you ſhould have any Knowledge of the moſt precious truths, as long you are thus proud and *ſelf-conceited*, it will not be ſavoury and effectual on your hearts. Humility feedeth, and Pride ſtarveth every Grace. The Spirit of God will not dwell with the proud: He will beat you out of *your ſelves*, unleſs you drive him away from *you*. Some ſeeming raptures and comforts, the *ſelf-conceited* have; which are but the deluding flatteries of *Self*, and the encouragements that Satan giveth to his ſervants: (For Satan will needs be a comforter for a while, as the Holy Ghoſt is to the Saints: and his followers alſo have their joys.) But it is the humble ſoul that hath the ſolid comforts. From the duſt of Humiliation, we have the cleareſt ſight of Glory, and conſequently, the ſweeteſt taſts of it. As high as the rain comes from, it is the loweſt valleys that receive it moſt, and retain it. Faith it ſelf will not proſper in the proud and *ſelf-conceited*: To ſuch the Goſpel will be fooliſhneſs, or an offence. It is only the humble that ſavingly cloſe with its myſteries. Humility cheriſheth the fear of God, and makes us ſay, *How ſhall we do this evil?* or neglect this duty? But Self-conceitedneſs and Pride is blind and bold, and deſtroyeth in mens apprehenſions, the difference between things ſacred and common, the Holy and the unclean: It diſpoſeth them to ſuch an unreverent boldneſs with holy things, as uſually ends in a prophane contempt: ſo that ſuch can at laſt deſpiſe holy ordinances which they ſhould live upon. Repentance and this Pride are deadly foes. To be Penitent and Proud, is to be Hot and Cold, alive and dead.

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Though Chriſt love not to find you in the duſt of earthly-mindedneſs, yet he loves to find you in the duſt of humility. The Publican that hanged down the head, did hit the way better to the ſight of God, then the *ſelf-conceited* Phariſee. The moſt *ſelf-denying* humiliation is the neereſt way to heaven, and the moſt *ſelf-exalting* Pride is the ſureſt and neereſt way to hell. I had rather ſit with *Mary* waſhing and wiping the feet of Chriſt, then ask as the mother of *James* and *John*, to ſit at Chriſts right hand and left hand in his Kingdom. *Mary* was in a manner thanked for the Love of her humility: and they were in a manner denied the requeſt that ſo little ſavoured of *ſelf-denial*. Our Lord doth not uſe to thank people for their ſervice, and yet he did that which was next to it, to this humble, *ſelf-denying*, penitent woman. He doth not uſe to deny his own Diſciples an heavenly requeſt: and yet he did that which was next to a denial, when *ſelf* brought him the petition. He that hath taught us not to preſs to the higheſt room, leſt with ſhame we hear, [*Sit lower*] doth hereby tell us what we muſt expect from himſelf: And he that hath bid us ſit down at the lower end, that we may hear [*Friend ſit up higher*] doth expreſs his purpoſe for humble, ſelf-denying ſouls. I had rather from the duſt hear his [*Come up higher*] then from ſelf-exaltation to hear [*Come down lower.*] O you that are proud, *ſelf-conceited* wretches, did you but know what good it doth an humble ſoul, to feel Chriſt take him up from the duſt, you would ſoon fall down that you might taſte their comforts in his lifting up. O what a bleſſed feeling it is, to feel ones ſelf in the arms of Chriſt! Our common compaſſion that makes us run to take up one that fals before us, is a ſpark of that compaſſion in Chriſt: who meddles with him that walks before us? but a man that fals down in a ſwoon, we are all ready to lay hands on! O happy fall, that makes us feel the arms of Chriſt! Though the fall into ſin be never the better, that occaſioneth it, yet the fall into Humiliation is the better, that prepareth for it. He that in his agony had an Angel to miniſter to him, will not leave the *ſelf-denying*, humble ſoul, without his Angel, or ſome way of relief that is ſutable to the neceſſity. Chriſt himſelf will not communicate himſelf to the proud and *ſelf-conceited*. He is wiſdom, but not to them that are wiſe in

Luke, 18. 10—14.

Luke, 7. 38.

Luke, 14. 8—11.

their own eyes already. He is *Righteouſneſs*, but not to them that Juſtifie *themſelves*: He is *Sanctification*, but not to thoſe that never found their own uncleannneſs. He is *Redemption*, but to none but thoſe that feel themſelves condemned. He hath the white rayment, and the treaſures of grace and glory: but its only for thoſe that penitently feel that they are poor and miſerable, and blind, and naked. Truly Sirs, thongh I have no mind to trouble the well-grounded peace or comfort of any of your *ſouls*, yet I would adviſe you, if you have never ſo good thoughts of your ſelves, *ſuſpect* leſt it ſhould be the fruit of *ſelf-conceitedneſs*: And if you ſhould have never ſo much peace and joy, look well whether it come from God or *ſelf-conceit*! And if it come not in *againſt ſelf*, its ten to one but it comes *from ſelf*. If your Peace and Comfort be not won from Chriſt, in a way of *ſelf-denial*, and as the ſpoils of the fleſh, you have it not in the ordinary way of God. Did you come to your Joy and Peace by humility, and *ſelf denial*, and *patience*, and mortification, and by becoming little children, and the ſervants of all, and by learning of Chriſt to be meek and lowly? If not, take heed leſt you nouriſh a changeling, an Imp of Hell, and a ſelfiſh brat, inſtead of the fruit of the Spirit; the peace and joy of the Holy Ghoſt. If you feel no great matter at home to trouble you, you are too Righteous to be Juſtified by Chriſt. If you groan not under your ignorance and unbelief, you are too wiſe to be Chriſts Diſciples: If you mourn not under the load and pain of ſin, you are too well to be Chriſts Patients. If you are readier to Juſtifie and excuſe your ſelves, then to condemn your ſelves, and had rather hear your ſelves praiſed, then reproved, admoniſhed, or inſtructed, and like *Diotrephes*, love to have the preheminence, you are too high for Chriſt to take any acquaintance with you; and too full of *ſelf* to have any room for his Love, and Spirit, and heavenly Conſolations. He that gave us the Parable of the importunate widdow, *Luke* 18. 2,3. would have us underſtand that bare neceſſity is not enough to fit us for relief (for then the worſt of men ſhould be the fitteſt): but it muſt be Neceſſity ſo felt, as to humble us, and drive us to importunity with God. The Prodigal was miſerable when he was denied the husks; but he never felt his Fathers

Luke 15.16-18.

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embracements till he came to *himſelf* by denying *himſelf*, and returning to his Father. And this the *ſelf-conceited* will not be perſwaded to. The firſt that muſt touch Chriſt after his reſurrection, is not a King, nor a Lord, no nor a man, but a woman that had been a ſinner. When ſhe held him by the feet, Love did begin *low* in humility, but it tended higher, and ended higher. Chriſt hath told us, that where much is forgiven there will be much love. For there's moſt of the fruits of Gods love, and leaſt of *ſelf*, and moſt to abaſe *ſelf*. It is not poſſible that love to Chriſt ſhould dwell or work in any but the humble, that feel at the heart that they are unworthy of love, and worthy of everlaſting wrath. The *Proud* and *Self-conceited* cannot love him; for they cannot be much taken with Chriſts love to them, except as the Phariſee in a way of *ſelf-flattery*. But the poor ſoul that was loſt, will heartily love him that ſought and found him; and he that was dead, will love when he finds himſelf alive; and he that was Condemned both by God and Conſcience, will ſurely love the Lord that ranſomed him! And it is the apprehenſions that men have of *themſelves* that much cauſeth all this difference. The *ſelf-abhorring*, *ſelf-judging*, *ſelf-denying* ſinner is melted with the love of God in Chriſt, becauſe it is to ſuch a worthleſs, ſinful wretch. *What Lord*, ſaith he, *is the blood of Chriſt, the pardon of ſin, the ſpirit of grace the priviledges of a child, and everlaſting glory for ſuch an unworthy wretch as I, that have ſo long offended thee, and ſo much neglected thee and lived ſuch a life as I have done, and am ſuch an empty unprofitable worm?*] *O what a wonder of mercy is this!*] But the full ſoul loaths the honey comb. The ſelf-conceited unhumbled ſinner looks as mindeleſly at Chriſt, as a healthful man at the Phyſitian, or an innocent man at a pardon. Luke. 7. 46. 47.

And that good that is in the Proud and *Selfconceited* doth ſeldom do much good to others, (much leſs to themſelves.) As ſuch do but ſeek and ſerve themſelves, ſo ordinarily God doth not bleſs their endeavours: but as they are perverted, they are the likeſt to pervert others, and propagate their ſelf-conceitedneſs: Two words from an humble *Self-denying* man, doth oftentimes more good then a ſermon from the *ſelf-conceited*.

I admoniſh you therefore in the name of God, that you

take heed of this part of *ſelfiſhneſs* and mortifie it. It will elſe keep out God, and almoſt all that is good. If you are proud and *ſelf-conceited*, you will hear a Miniſter rather to cavil with him, then to be edified: and when any thing from God doth croſs your fooliſh wiſdom, you will but ſlight it, or make a jeſt at it: And if any truth of God do ſtrike at the heart of your *ſelfiſh* intereſt, you will but fret at it, and ſecretly hate it, and perhaps, as the Devils open ſouldiers, publikely reproach it; and as the Jews did againſt *Stephen*, *Act.7.* even gnaſh the teeth at the preacher, or as they did by *Paul*, Act 22.22. [*They gave him audience to that word* (even that word that made againſt themſelves) *and then lift up their voices, and ſaid, Away with ſuch a fellow from the earth; for it is not fit that he ſhould live*] This entertainment we ſtill meet with from our hearers, when *ſelf* hath brought them the next ſtep to hell.

O Sirs, ſuſpect your own underſtandings: Think not of them beyond the proportion of your attainments: Nor beyond your experience, and the helps, and time, and opportunities which you have had for knowledge, nor beyond the meaſure of your diligence for the improving of theſe. For theſe are Gods ordinary way of giving in a ripeneſs in knowledge. Read and ſtudy *Heb.*5.12,14. 1 *Tim.*3.6. Set not up your own conceits too boldly againſt thoſe of longer ſtanding and diligence in holy ſtudies, much leſs againſt your Teachers, and much leſs againſt a multitude of Miniſters; and much leſs againſt all the Church of God; and leaſt of all againſt God himſelf, as ſpeaking to you by the holy Scriptures. O take warning by the ſwarms of hereſies and ſcandals that have been cauſed by *ſelf-conceitedneſs* and pride.

Object. If you may think your ſelf wiſer then me and others without *ſelf-conceitedneſs*, why may not I think my *ſelf* wiſer then you and ſuch others without *ſelf-conceitedneſs? Anſw.* I may not do it in the caſes before mentioned. I may not think my ſelf to be what I am not, nor exalt my ſelf above them that are wiſer then I, nor againſt my Guides, or the Church of God.

Object. *But it is but your conceit that you are wiſe enough to be a Teacher, or wiſer then others, and why may not I as well conceit it?*

Anſw. No man on his *own Conceits* muſt *become a Teacher*; but

but the judicious of that Calling must Call them, and judge of their abilities. And *conceits* are as the *ground* of them is. The true understanding of the grace that we have received is a duty, and fitteth us for thankfulness: but the false conceit that we have what we have not, is a dangerous delusion [*For he that thinketh he is something when he is nothing, deceiveth himself*, Gal.6.3. What if a blind man should argue as you do with one that sees, and say, [*You say that you see so far off, and why may not I say so too?*] would you not answer him [*I know that which I say to be true, and so do not you*] And what if he still go on and say [*you think that I am blind, and I think that you are blind; and why may not I be believed as well as you?*] would this kind of talk prove the man to have his eye-sight? or should it make me question whether I have mine? He that seeth, knoweth that he seeth, whoever question it: and if another make doubt of it, let men that have eyes in their head be Judges, but not the blind. But I confess, spiritual blindness hath this disadvantage, that whereas I can easily make any other blind man know that he is blind, and therefore be willing to be led or helpt: here the more blind men are, most commonly they are the more confident that they see, and scornfully say, as the Pharises to Christ, *John* 9. 40. [*Are we blind also?*] For Pride will not let them know their ignorance. The same light that cureth ignorance, must reveal it. Especially when men are born blind, and never knew the saving illumination of the Saints, they will not believe that there is any other light then they have seen. But I have been somewhat long on this part; I pass now to the next.

Chap. XV.

Self-will to be denyed.

4. The fourth part of selfishness to be mortified, is *Self-will*. And this is the fruit of *Self-conceit*, and also a natural corruption of the soul; And a most deep rooted obstinate vice it is. Every wicked man is a *Self-willed* man, against God,

God, and all that speak for God. And till *Self* be mortified in the will, there is no saving grace in that will.

Quest. *But what will is it that is to be called a self-will?*

Answ. Not that which is from God and for God; but all the rest. 1. That will that is not fetched from God, and moved by his will, as the lesser wheels in a clock are moved by the first wheel and by the poise, is no better then *self-will*. A will that is not dependent on Gods will, is an Idol, usurping the prerogative of God; for it is proper to him to be dependent upon none, and to have a will that is not ruled by a Superior will. Little do the most know how great a sin this is, to be *Self-willed*. You have a Will to something or other continually, and it is your *will* that ruleth the rest of your faculties and actions: but what is it that ruleth your will? whence do you fetch the rise and reason of your desires? Is it from *Gods will*, or is it not? Matth. 6. 10. You pray to God [*Thy will be done*] and do your own wills answer these prayers? or are they hypocritical dissembling words? If indeed it be Gods will that you would have fulfilled, then will the knowledge of that will of God determine your own wills. As a servant dependeth on his Masters will, for all the work that he is to do, and doth not what he will himself, but what his Master will have him do; and as a Schollar dependeth on his Masters will, and learneth only such books and lessons as he sets him; so must we depend on the will of God; and know what is his will, before we give way to any will of our own. The reason why you choose any trade or calling or course of life, should be the will of God. If you are in Poverty, and desire to be richer, and that to please your own wills, and not that you think that it would be any more pleasing to God, this is *selfwilledness*. If you desire any change in your condition, if you undertake any thing in the world, know why you do this: whether it be principally because you think it is the will of God, or because it is your own will; I tell you again, you should not have one wish or desire in your souls, till you can prove or find that God would have it so: and if your own wills be made the absolute rulers of your waies, you make gods of your selves, and God will deal with you acccordingly.

2. Yea if you do think the will of God is according to your will,

will, and you are moved the more to it on that account, yet if your own wills do lead and make the first choice, and Gods will be brought in but to follow and encourage yours, this is still Self-willedness and Self-idolizing. This is the common trick of the ungodly. They first give way to their own *self-will*, and then they will go to Scripture for somewhat to bear them out; and will needs believe that Gods is agreeable to theirs, that so they may go on with peace of Conscience. They go for counsel to God as *Balaam* did, not sincerely to know the will of God with a resolution to obey it, but with a desire that God would conform his will to theirs. I tell you, if the matter be never so much commanded in the Scriptures, and never so agreeable to the will of God, yet if you desire and do it from your selves, and not for this reason, because it is the will of God, and do not let Gods will lead your own, but let your own will lead, and Gods will follow, this is no better then *self-willedness*, were the matter never so good in it self. Numb. 22.

3. If the end that moveth your will, be not the service and glory of God, but only your own Interest, this is but *self-will*. God giveth you leave to look to your selves as his Servants in a due subserviency to him: But if you will principally look at your own interest, and make light of Gods, and fetch the reason of your will and desires from your own ends and commodity, rather then his Glory, this is an ungodly *selfish-will*. And yet alas, how many are there that know not any better frame of *will* then this? If they were truly to give an account of the principal reason and motive of every desire of their hearts, why they would have this, or why they would do that, must they not confess it is for themselves, because it serveth their own ends or interests, and because it pleaseth their own wills, and not because it furnisheth them better to serve and please the will of God. If you ask men in their buying, and selling, and marrying, and trading, and dealing with men, why it is that they do this or that; can they truly say, I do it because I think in this way I can do God the best service, and the Church or Commonwealth most good; and this is my chief reason? Alas, I fear they are too few that have any higher principal end and motive then self. *Self-will* is the spring of their whole Conver-

sations, that sets them upon all they do. Nay doubtless, in the very duties of Religion, in praying, hearing, reading and the like, they are but serving self, while they take on them to serve God; and their holiest devotions is but such a serving of God, as flatterers will serve their Prince or Landlord, meerly that he may do them a good turn, and may serve *their* Ends, and be serviceable to them; or else as some *Indians* serve the Devil, for fear of him lest he should do them a mischief. The *will* that is moved chiefly by *self-interest*, is a *self-will*.

4. And much more is it *self-willedness*, when men contradict the *Will* of God: when Scripture saith *One* thing, and they another: when they distrelish Gods Laws, and dislike the work that he sets them on; when they have a *Will* to that which God forbids, and would fain be doing with unlawful things; yea and it doth not satisfie their corrupt desires to see that the expres will of God is against them; this is *self-will* in a high degree.

5. So also when mens *wils* are to that which is against the honour and interest of God; which would hinder his Gospel, and the saving of mens souls, and is displeasing to him, this is *self-willedness* in a high degree.

And thus you see what it is to be *self-willed*. And now do but consider whether this part of *self* be commonly denied in the world. Among the millions of desires that are in mens hearts, how few of them are kindled by the commands of God, or moved by his Interest and Glory? How commonly are the word and wayes of God distastful to the world? How ill do men like the disposals of his providence? And what a striving is there in their wils against him? And were it not that God is above them and unconquerable, and they know that striving will not help them, you should have most of the world in open war against the God of Heaven: I speak no more then I am able to prove. The Dominion of *self* is so great in the wils of all that are unsanctified, that their *wils* are utterly against the Will of God; and its meerly, because there's no remedy, that they submit to him so far as they do. Those very persons that think they love and serve him as well as the preciest, would be in arms against him before to morrow, and pull God out of Heaven if it were in their power: Or if they had but as much hope

to prevail against God, as they have against his servants, what work would be in the world? I know these men will not believe this by themselves: No: *self* is too strong in them to let them so far know themselves; But the Case is plain. For as God himself tell us, that ever since the fall an Enmity is put between Christ and this serpentine seed; so we see it manifested by daily sad experience. How generally is the Will of God disliked by the world? What hath God spoke against in his Word but sin? and what else hath he commanded his Messengers to Cry out against? And yet what is there that more pleaseth the minds of the most? And how stubbornly do they resist not only God, but Magistrates and Ministers that would draw them from it? what is it that God commendeth to the world so much as an Holy and Heavenly life? And what is the Heart of most men more against? and how much do they strive against all our perswasions that would bring them to it? and how obstinately do they resist us, if not deride and scorn that Holiness which the will of God hath so abundantly commended to them? His whole Word speaks for it: his Prophets, Apostles, and all his servants are examples of it; his Son Jesus Christ in his sacred person, and office, and holy life, hath yet more notably commended it to the world; and it was a principal part of his business in the flesh, to set men a pattern of Holiness and *Self-denial*: And yet many scorn it, and hate it, and most dislike it, and even fight against this holy *Will* of God, that is, against God himself, if they had but any hope to get the better; There is no doubt of it, though they will not know so much by themselves. Do you think it is for nothing that God calleth them his enemies, and resolveth them the reward of enemies, even because they would not have Christ to rule over them? *Luke.* 19.27. Doubtless God sentenceth no man unjustly: If he say they are such, and condemn them as such, its certain that they are such. O but the infinite dreadful God is out of *their* reach; but they be not out of *his* reach. Their malice cannot hurt him any more then it can stop the course of the Sun; but *his* displeasure will quickly bring *them* down. In the mean time, these wretches should consider what a God they have had to do with, that beareth with their malignity. The Sun or Moon forbear not

to shine even on the dogs that bark at them. Thy rebellious *self* hath hitherto been maintained by the mercy of that *Will* of God which thou hast resisted. But this patience will not always last: Take therefore this necessary advice in time. Down with thine own Idolatrous *self-will*; Know not a will or desire in thy self, that's not moved by the will of God, even by his word as thy ground, and his pleasure and honour as thy chiefest end. Destroy that *will* that springs but from *self*, and is moved but by the Interest of *self*. Slay it before the Lord as his enemy, as *Samuel* did *Agag*. Though an hypocritical *Saul* will spare this king of rebellion, designed to destruction, yet so will not an obedient servant of God. I will not bid thee offer it in sacrifice to Gods Will: for it is too vile to be an acceptable sacrifice: But utterly destroy it as the accursed thing. Know not hereafter such a thing within thee as a will that is Originally or Finally thine *Own*. If the Word and the Glory of God be the movers of it, thou mayst call that Gods Will, as well as thine own: It is thine subjectively, but it is Gods as the principal Efficient and End. O that you did but know what your *Own* wils are, and what they have done against you, and what they may yet do, if they be not mortified! You would not then be so indulgent to them, and pamper and please them, and be so desirous to have your own *wils* as you have been. To this end I pray you consider but of these few particulars following.

1. The *will* of man is the terrestrial Throne of God. It is there that he must reign. The will is to Rule all the inferiour faculties; and God is to rule the will. And shall *self* presume to dethrone the Lord, and sit down in his place? He that rules the will, rules the man. And shall *self* be thy Ruler? And will God put up all this?

2. It is God only that hath the soveraign authority, and *self* hath none but under him. We are not our own; and therefore have nothing to do with *our selves* but at the Will of God that is our Owner. Take heed therefore of this Usurpation.

3. Thy Own will is a corrupt and sinful will, and therefore unfit to be thy governor: what, wilt thou chuse an unjust, a wicked, and unmerciful governor, that is inclined to do evil? Why such is thine own *Will*; But the *Will* of God is perfectly good,

good, that hath not the least inclination to evil, nor possibility of such a thing. Be ruled by it, and you are most certain to have the most just, and holy, and faithful, and merciful ruler in the world. To prefer *self-will* before the Will of God, is as the Jews, to prefer a murderer *Barabbas*, before the Lord of life.

4. Moreover, Our *own wils* are guided by a dark understanding: and therefore ready on every occasion to turn aside. Though the will commandeth, yet the understanding guideth it: And therefore as the dark understanding is commonly at a loss, or quite mistaken, judging evil to be good, and good to be evil: so the will must needs be an unhappy governor, that followeth the direction of so ignorant a Counsellor: But if you will deny your *Own wils*, and be ruled by the Will of God, you need not fear misleading, seeing his wisdom is infallible and infinite. Chuse not a blind guide then, when you may have the conduct of wisdom it self; when God is content to be your Governor, prefer not such foolish sinners as *your selves* before him.

5. Moreover, Your *self-will* hath almost undone you already: It hath been the cause of all your sin and misery: Never any hurt befell you, or any man on Earth, but from *self-will*. And yet will you follow it still, and take no warning, as if it had not done enough against you? But on the contrary, you were never hurt in all your lives by following the *Will* of God: unless it be such a hurt as the searching or cleansing of a sore, without which it cannot be healed; or such a hurt as the taking of Physick, without which you can have no cure. Tell me if you can, when ever the Will of God did wrong you? when did you speed the worse for the following of his counsel? Look back upon your lives, and tell me whether all your smart and loss have come from your following Gods Will, or your own; and which you think you have more cause to repent of.

6. There is none followeth *self-will* to the end, but is everlastingly undone by it: It leadeth directly to the displeasing of Gods Will, and so to Hell: But on the contrary, there is none that sincerely and finally follow the Will of God, that ever do miscarry: He is the safest Conductor: He never led a soul to hell. All that follow him, live with him: For whither should he lead them but to himself? And where God is, there is life and

glory. To obey his Will, is to please his Will: And to please him, is our very end. It cannot go ill with them that please the Lord and Judge of all the world, the dispenser of all Rewards and Punishments.

7. Your *own wils* are so mutable as well as misguided, that they will bewilder you and toss you up and down in perpetual disquietness; though I know you think that it is the only way to your content, and nothing will content you unless you have your *will*. But you are lamentably deluded; your *wils* are like the *will* of a man in a fever, that would fain have cold water, which pleaseth him in the drinking, but afterwards may be his death. You love that which hurteth you; yea that which is no better then poyson to your *Souls*. You would soon undo your selves, if you had your own *wils*. It is none of the least of Gods mercies to you to cross your wils, and to deny you that which you have a mind to. You will not let your children eat or drink what *they will*, but what *you will*, that know better what's good for them. A patient can deny his *own will* for his health, and submit himself to the *will* of his Physician. And should not you much more submit to God? yea you should *desire* him to deny your own wils, when ever he seeth them contrary to *his Will*, and to your own good: Had you but the skill of judging aright of Gods dealings, I am perswaded that upon the review of your lives, you would find, that God hath shewed you more mercy in the crossing of your wils, then in accomplishing them. Be not therefore too eager for the time to come, to have what you *Love*, till you are surer that you *Love* nothing but that which is good for you, and which you *should* love. The present contenting of diseased *self-will*, is but the breeding of after-disquietness. But in the *Will of* God you may have full and durable content. For his *Will* is *always* for good, and therefore hath nothing that should cause your discontent. His Will is still the same and unchangeable; and therefore will not disquiet you by mutations. He knows the end at the beginning, and sets you upon nothing but what he is sure will comfort you at the last. It belongeth to *his will* and not to *yours* to dispose of you & all your affairs. And therefore there is all the reason in the world, that Gods Will should be set up, and in it you

should

should rest your selves content, and that *self-will* should be denied as the disturber of your quietness.

8. Moreover, *Self-will* is Satans will, and stirred up by him against the Lord. How else do you think the Devil rules the children of disobedience, but by *self-conceit* and *self-will?* If therefore you would deny the Devil, deny *Self-will*; for in being ruled by it, you are ruled by him; and in pleasing it, you please him. God himself tels you this in plain expressions, *Eph.* 2. 1,2,3. They that *walk in trespasses and sins*, and so *are dead in them, according to the course of this world, and in the lusts of the flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind, these* the Holy Ghost there tels you, *do walk according to the Prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience.*

9. It is the very perfection and felicity of man, to be conformed to the *Will* of God, and to rest with full content therein; And it is the corruption and misery of man, to have a *selfish* misguided Will of his own, and strive against his Makers Will. And so far as you stick in your own wils, and are set upon them, and must have them fulfilled, and cannot rest in the Will of God, so far are you still unsanctified, and unsaved, and in the power of your great disease. And so far as you are dead to *Self-will*, and look up to the Will of God both for direction and content, and will that which he willeth, even because he willeth it, and would have you will it, and can rest your souls in this as full satisfaction [It is my Fathers Will, and therefore best.] So far are you sanctified and restored to God.

10. Lastly, let me tell you, that its best for you to deny *self-will* in time, and give your *wils* to the *Will* of God. For when you have done all that you can, God *will* have *his* Will, and you shall not have your own will long. You may strive against the *Will* of God, but you shall not frustrate it. You may break his Laws, but shall not scape his judgements. You may rebell against his *commanding will* but you cannot resist his *punishing will*. When you have done your worst, its Gods will that must stand; and such a will as is little to the pleasure of your wils. But *Self-will* is never of long continuance: its content is short. Now you will have your *Will*, let God say what he will

to

to you: you Love to please your appetite in meats and drinks; you love to be carnally merry, and spend your time in vain sports and pleasure; you love to be respected and humoured by all, and to be honoured and counted some body in the world; you love to be provided for, for the time to come, and to be wealthy that you may take out of a full heap; or at least not want for the contentment of your flesh: and therefore you must have your *wils*, and have that you *love*, if you can tell how to get it: But *how long* will you have your *wils*? *How long* will you have that you love, though God forbid it? When death comes, will you have it then? when you lie in pain expecting every hour to appear in another world, will you then have your *wils*? when you are in Hell, will you then have your *wils*, or that you love? O Sirs, *Self-will* is short-lived, as to its delights and pleasure: But the Will of God is everlasting. And therefore if you take up with your own wils, how short will be your content! but if you look for content in the Will of God, you will have everlasting content. Your own wils may be crost by every trifle; Any man that is greater then you can cross them: yea those that are under you can cross them. The poorest beggar can rob you, or scorn you, or raise a slander of you, or twenty wayes can cross your *self-wils*; A hundred accidents may cross them. Your very Beast can cross you; and almost any thing in the world can cross you; much more can God at any time cross you; and cross you certainly he will: so that in your own wils there is no rest nor happiness. But if you could bring your *wils* to *Gods*, and take up your full content in this [*It is the Will of God*,] then what a constant, invincible content might you have! Then all the world could not disturb you and rob you of your content, because they cannot conquer the Will of God: His will shall be done; and so you should always have content.

CHAP.

CHAP. XVI.

Selfish Passions to be denied.

5. ANother part of *selfishness* to be mortified and denied, is, *selfish Passions*. The soul is furnished with Passions by by God, partly for the exciting of the *will* and other faculties, that they do not sluggishly neglect their duties; and partly to help them in the execution when they are at work: So that they are but the wheels or the sails of the reasonable soul, to speed our motion for God and our salvation, and not to be employed for *carnal self*. When Passions and Affections are sanctified and used for God, they are called such and such particular Graces, and the fervour of them is an *holy Zeal*; But when they are used for *carnal self* they are our vices; and the heat of them is but fury, or carnal zeal, and the height of vice. But how rare is it to meet with men that are meek and patient in their own cause, and passionate in a holy zeal for God? I know many are passionate in disputes & other exercises about religion, and think that its purely zeal for God, when *self* is at the bottom of the business, and ruleth as well as kindleth the fire, when they scarce discern it, and little know what spirit they are of: But pure *zeal* for God, conjoyned with *self-denial*, is exceeding rare. How few can say that their *Love* to God, is greater and hotter then their *Love* to *themselves?* The *Desires* of men are strong after those things that supply their own necessities, and please their own corrupted wils: but how cold are they after the honour of God? How *averse* are men from that which hurteth the flesh! as to go into a pest-house, or to take deadly poyson, or to suffer any pain: but few are so *averse* to the breaking of the Law of God. A hard word or a little injury done to themselves, will put them into a *passion*, so that their anger is working out in reproach, if not in more revenge: but God may be abused from day to day, and how *patiently* can they bear it? There's few carnal minds but can more patiently hear a man swear, or curse, or scorn at Scripture and a holy life, then hear him call them *Rogue*, or Knave, or Theif, or Lyar, or any such disgraceful

name. It seems an intolerable dishonour with selfish persons that are advanced by Pride to be great in their own eyes, for a a man to give them the lye, or to reproach their parentage, or make them seem base: but they can hear twenty oaths and reproaches of the truths or ways of God as quietly and patiently as if there were no harm in them. Their own enemies, whom God commandeth them to love, they hate at the heart: but the enemies of God and holiness, whom *David hated with a perfect hatred*, Psal. 139. 21, 22. do little or nothing at all offend them. It is not thus with *self-denying* gracious souls. When *David* heard *Shimei* curse him, he commanded his souldiers to let him alone, for God had bidden him; that is, by that afflicting providence on *David* he had occasioned it, and by the withdrawing of his restraint he had let out his malice, for a trial to *David*. Thus *David* could endure a man to go along by him cursing him, and reviling him as a Traitor, and a man of blood, and throwing stones at him; and he rebuked *Abishai* that would have taken off his head, 2 *Sam.* 16. 7, 8, 9, 13. But when the same *David* speaks of the *wicked*, the *froward*, the *slanderer*, the *proud*, the *lyar*, and the *deceitful*, he resolveth that he will *not know them, they shall not dwell in his house, nor tarry in his sight; he hateth them; they shall depart from him; he will cut them off, and early destroy them from the Land, and from the city of the Lord*. Psal. 101. So was it with *Moses*: when God was offended by the Idolatry of the *Israelites*, he was so zealous that he threw down the Tables of Stone, in which God had written the Law, and broke them: but when *Miriam* and *Aaron* spake against *himself*, he let God alone with the cause, and only prayed for them; for saith the Text, [*He was very meek above all the men that were on the face of the earth,*] Numb. 12. 3. *Phinehas* his zeal for God did stay the plague, and was imputed to him for righteousness: when the *selfish* zeal of *Simeon* and *Levi* was called but a cursed anger, and brought a curse on them instead of a blessing from their dying Father, that they should be *divided in* Jacob, *and scattered in* Israel; and left them the name of *Instruments of cruelty*, Gen. 49. 5, 6, 7.

Take warning then from the Word of God; and use your Passions

Paſſions for God that gave them you; but when it is meerly the cauſe of *ſelf*, be dead to paſſion as if there were no ſuch thing within you. If the wrong be done to *you*, think then with *your ſelves*, [*alas, I am ſuch a ſilly wretched worm that a wrong done to me is a ſmall matter, in compariſon of the leaſt that's done to God: it is not great enough for indignation or paſſion:*] Remember, that its Gods work to right your wrongs, and your work to lament and hinder the abuſe of God. And therefore if men curſe you, or revile you, or ſlander you, if Gods intereſt in your reputation command you to ſeek the clearing of it, then do it, but not for *your ſelf*, but for God: but otherwiſe, be as a dead man that hath no eyes to ſee an injury, nor no ears to hear it, nor no heart to feel it, nor no underſtanding to perceive it, nor no hands to be revenged for it: This is to be mortified, and dead to *ſelf*. When Paſſion begins to ſtir within you, ask, *Whats the matter? who is it for? and who is it that is wronged?*] If it be God, ask counſel of God, what he would have you to do, and let your paſſion be well guided and bounded, and then it will be acceptable holy zeal: but if if it be but *ſelf* thats wronged, remember that *you are not your own*; and therefore take no thought of the buſineſs, but leave God to look to his *own*, and do with it as he pleaſe: If you are *his*, your cauſe is *his*, and therefore let him look to it that is concerned in it more then you; and that hath ſaid, [*Vengeance is mine, and I will repay.*]

Chap. XVII.

Self-imagination to be denied.

6. Another part of *ſelf* to be mortified and denied, is *Self-imagination*. It is the *ſelfiſhneſs* of mens thoughts, that is the *vanity* of their thoughts; and theſe are the *Imaginations that are only evil continually*. The thoughts ſhould be let out on God, and his ſervice; ſo that our *meditation of him ſhould be ſweet, and we ſhould delight in the Lord*, Pſal. 104. 34. and *in the multitude of our thoughts within us, his comforts ſhould delight our ſouls*, Pſal. 94. 19. *His word ſhould be our meditation all the*

day, Psal. 119.97,99. *and in his Law should we meditate day and night*, Psal. 1. 2. God should be the Spring, the End, the Sum of all our thoughts; If we find a thought in our minds, that savoureth not of God, yea that is not sent by him, and doing his work, we must disown it, apprehend it, and cast it out. But alas how contrary is the case with the most? As *self* is advanced highest in their imagination, so doth it there attract and dispose of the thoughts. What are all the thoughts of unsanctified men employed for, but for *themselves* and *theirs*? Their fantasies hunt about the world; but its their own game and pleasure that they range about. The thoughts of one man run upon his covetousness, and another mans upon his filthy lusts, and another mans on his sports and pleasures, and anothers upon his honour and reputation with men! They feed the imaginations of their mind upon almost nothing but *selfish* things! sometimes delighting themselves with the very *thoughts* of mens esteem of them, or of their worldly plenty, or of their sinful lusts and pleasures, & sometime troubling *themselves* with the *thoughts* of their wants, or low condition, or crosses, or injuries from men: sometime *contriving* how they may attain their desires; and carking and caring for the accomplishing their *selfish* ends: morning & evening, at home and abroad, as the thoughts of the sanctified are on God, and heaven, and the way thereto: so the thoughts of the unsanctified are all upon *self*, and the interest of self, and the means thereto. O cleanse your minds Sirs, of this great *self-pollution*: Keep them more clean and chaste to God. Deny *self* this room in your imaginations, and waste not *thoughts* and precious time, on such unjust and unprofitable imployment. It is an impertinency, to be so much solicitous about the charge of God, and to care so much when he hath bid us, *Be careful for nothing*: It is a debasing of our minds to feed them so long on so low an object, when they might be taken up with God. *Care not therefore what you shall eat or drink, or wherewith you shall be cloathed; for after all these things do the selfish* unsanctified *Gentiles seek; and our Father knoweth that we have need of all these things: but seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you*, Mat. 6. 31,32,33. *Self* doth but rob you of the fruit of your thoughts which you might reap by feeding them on God.

CHAP.

Chap XVIII.

Inordinate Appetite to be denyed.

7. THe last part of *self* to be denyed is your *inordinate Appetites*, excited by the senses, commonly called the *sensitive Appetite*. These are not to be themselves destroyed. For the Appetite is natural and necessary to our welfare: but the inordinate desire is to be denyed, and the Appetite restrained, and no further satisfied then is allowed by the word of God; and by this means the inordinacy of it may come to be mortified. Though *Selfishness* hath defiled the whole man, yet *sensual pleasure* is the chief part of its interest, and therefore by the senses it commonly works, and these are the doors and windows by which iniquity entreth into the soul. And therefore a principal part of *self-denyal* consisteth in *denying* the *sensitive Appetite*.

Quest. But how far is this Appetite to be denyed? *Answ.* 1. When ever it craveth any thing that is forbidden: This is past doubt. It must not be pleased to the disobeying of God. 2. When it riseth us *towards* that which is forbidden, and would be feeding on the *baits and occasions* of sin; unless the thing desired be *necessary*, it is here to be denyed. For sin and Hell are dangers that no wise man will draw too near to. 3. When ever the pleasing of the sense *conduceth not to Gods service*, and doth not fit or furnish us for our duty, it is unlawful.

Quest. But may not the Creatures be received for *Delight*, as well as for Necessity? *Answ.* Its an ill expressed question: As if Delight it self were never *necessary*. Necessity is either *Absolute*, as of those things without which we cannot be saved; or it is only to our *bettering* and the greater *securing* of our salvation: and so its taken for that which is any way useful and profitable to it; directly or indirectly. We may and must make use of the creatures, 1. Not only for our *own Necessity*, but principally for the setvice and glory of God, 1 *Cor.* 10. 31. And, 2. not only for our *Absolute* necessity, but also when they in any measure further us in or to the service of God;

so be it they be not on any other account unlawful. 3. We may use the Creatures for delight, when that Delight it self is a means to fit us for the work of God, and is sincerely sought for that intent. But we may not use them for any other Delight, but that which it self is necessary or useful to Gods service. Reasons are evident. 1. Because we should else make that Delight our ultimate end, which is as bad as brutish; for either it must be an *End*, or *Means*. If it be not used as a means to God as our ultimate end, it must be our ultimate end it self, which is no better then to take his place. 2. That action is idle, and consequently a sinful misimploying of our faculties which doth not conduce to the end that we were made for, and live for. 3. It is a misimploying of Gods creatures, and a sinful casting them away to use them for any end which is not it self a means to the great end of our lives. All is lost that is no way useful to God and our salvation. It is contrary to the end of their Creation and of ours. 4. It is a sinful robbing God of the use of his talents, if we use them for any end that is not subservient to himself as the chief end. For certainly he made all things for himself, and that which is not employed for him, is taken from him injuriously. All men must answer for the mercies which they have received; whether they have so used them for God, as that they can give him his own with the improvement.

5. The sensitive Appetite by reason of its inordinacy, is grown a Rebel against God and Reason; and an enemy to him and to our selves. And no man should unnecessarily please or feed so dangerous an enemy. Sin doth most make its entrance this way; and most men lie in sin before our eyes, by pleasing their senses: And shall we run our selves on such a great and visible danger, against the warning of so many experiences? Yea we know that we have been often this way overtaken our selves, and that abundance of sin hath crept in at these passages; and yet shall we plead for liberty to undo our selves? The godly are so conscious of their weakness and proness to sin, that they are jealous of themselves; and therefore it beseemeth not such to do any thing needlesly that may tempt them to it, and is so likely to prove a snare. If *Paul must beat and tame his body*

to

to bring it into subjection, lest when he had preached to others, he should be cast away himself, (1 Cor. 9. 27.) much more have we need to be watchful that are more weak. We are commanded expressly to *make no provision for the flesh, to satisfie the lusts or* (*desires*) *thereof*, Rom. 13. 14. And therefore they that eat, or drink, or do any thing else for the meer *satisfaction of the desires of the flesh*, and for its delight, do break this express command of God. And how is it said, that *they that are Christs have Crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts or desires thereof*, if they may use the Creatures meerly to delight and please the flesh? This is not *Crucifying its affections and desires*, Gal. 5 24.

Jobs *Covenant with the eyes* that they gaze not on alluring objects, (*Job* 31. 1.) was an act of *self-denyal* that others need as well as *Job*. Such a Covenant with our taste, and with our ears, and with every sense, that they move not but by the consent of God and Reason, and let not in any sin into the soul, is a most eminent part of this necessary duty. *Davids* Adultery and Murder did first make its entrance at the eye. Had *Noah* more jealously watcht his Appetite, he had not by Drunkenness been a warning to posterity. It was *Achan* eyes that betrayed his heart to the gold, and silver, and rich attire, though an accursed thing, *Josh.* 7. 20. 21. What sin almost doth not enter at some of these ports?

Be sure therefore that no sense be without its guard: *Accustom* your selves to *deny* them, and the conquest will be easie. It is not to deny them any thing that is useful to you for Gods service, and a true means to your holy Ends, that I advise you to; but only that which would betray you by delighting them. It is not to *destroy* the body, but to *tame* it, *keep it under, and bring it into subjection*: and this *must* be done. To move to this, consider yet further these three or four things more distinctly.

1. It is for want of this part of *self-denyal* that the world is so full of *scandals*, and the Consciences of men so full of wounds, and Professors walk so unevenly with God, and seem to be but as other men. Here one drops into tipling, if not stark drunkenness; and there another into wantonness, if not fornication:

cation: and many live in gluttony, and never see it nor repent of it; and many are drowned in covetous desires and practices; and some give up themselves to sensual pastimes; and all because they do not make this covenant with their senses, nor have ever yet learned to *Deny themselves*; but because it pleaseth them, they think it is not displeasing to God; and that its no sin, but a part of their Christian liberty: yea many of them think that by this doctrine of self-denyal, we would deny them the use of the mercies of God, and consequently hinder them from thankfulness for them. And thus they make a Religion of Pleasing the flesh, which is the deadly enemie to God and Religion. They imagine a *Liberty purchased* them to *Please* it, and fulfill its desires; and they measure out mercies as they please it, and they would return God a fleshly thanks for these mercies, and offer him a sacrifice as the Heathens did to *Ceres* and *Bacchus*; when as the Gospel knoweth no mercy, but either eternal mercy, or that which is a means to it: nor will it call that a mercy which hath not a tendency to God: nor did Christ purchase us any liberty, but what is *from sin* or *punishment*, and is *for his Service*: He did not *suffer in the flesh* to procure us liberty unprofitably to indulge and please the flesh, and to strengthen our enemie, and by use to give it the mastery, when this mastery is the damnation of most of the world. If Christians had learnt more to deny their senses, they would walk more blamelesly and inoffensively in the world: if they would keep at a distance from the bait, and when they cannot do so, yet shut up these doors, that it may be at a distance from their minds, how safely would they walk that now are stumbling at every creature that is given for their relief! The objects of sense are these lower things, so contrary to the objects of faith, that the more we love the one of them, the less we shall regard the other: and therefore these are always working against each other. And as the objects of faith are then most sweet and powerful with us, when faith is set most fully upon them; so the objects of sense are then most powerful to draw us from God, when the doors of sense are set wide open, and the appetite let loose upon them.

2. And you may further observe that almost all the *grossest* sins

sins in the world, do begin with some little liberty of the senses, which at first we take for a lawful or indifferent thing. The filthiest whoredoms do usually begin in lustful looks, and thoughts and speeches, and so proceed to lascivious behaviour, and so to filthiness it self. And the glutton and the drunkard are first ensnared by the eye, and then by tasting, and so proceed by little and little to excess: see therefore that you keep as far from the baits of sensuality as you can: and lay a command upon your senses to forbear: if you look upon it, you are next to touching it; and if you touch it, you are next to tasting it: and if you taste it, you are like to let it down; and if you let it down, you are like to venture again and let down more: and all must up again or you are lost. And therefore keep out the first beginnings, and think with your selves, If sin be the poyson of my soul, the digesting of it will be my ruine: and if I cannot digest it, why should I let it down? and if I may not let it down, what reason have I to be tasting it? and if I should not taste it, why should I touch it or be medling with it? and if I may not meddle with it, why should I look upon it, or hearken to them that would entice me to it? so that the Denying of your senses and your Appetite, is the sure & easie way to prevent those dreadful gripes that else may follow.

3. Moreover, if you deny not your sensitive appetites, you will never be acquainted with *heavenly delights*. The soul cannot move two contrary ways at once, towards earth and towards heaven. When you gaze upon this world and feed your appetites with fleshly delights, you have no heart nor mind to the delights above. It is the soul that *retires* from creatures, and sensual objects, that is free for God, and ready to entertain the motions of Grace. Not that I would have you turn Hermits and Monks, and forsake the company of men and all worldly business; No, it is an higher and nobler course that I propound to you: even in the midst of the world to live as without the world, and as if there were nothing before you for sensuality to feed upon: To live so fully to God in the world, that you may see God in all the creatures, and converse with him in those same objects, by which the sensual are turned from him: and to live in the greatest fulness of all things, as if there

were nothing but penury *to your flesh*, and seeing God in all, and using all for God, and denying *Self*, where you have *opportunity* to please it; this is the most noble life on earth. But if you find that you *cannot* attain to this, and that you *cannot* deny your selves the delights of earth, unless you withdraw from the sight of the objects; *do so* and spare not, so far as may consist with your serviceableness to God and humane Society: But still you shall find that whether earthly delights are present or absent, your minds must retire from that which doth allure and gratifie the flesh, if ever you would enjoy Communion with God, and taste of the delights of an heavenly conversation.

4. And by pleasing your senses, you will *increase* their *vitious inordinate desires*. The more you gratifie them, the more they'l crave: you feed your disease by yielding to such desires; but never think to quiet it by contenting it. The more the flesh hath, the more it would have. The onely way to abate the rage of sensual desires, is to deny them, and use them constantly to that denyal. *The safest food and raiment is that which best strengtheneth and furnisheth us for Gods service, with the least content and pleasure to our sensual appetites and desires.* And the same I must say of house, and lands, and labours, and friends, and all the Creatures; that's the best state of life in which God is served and pleased best, with the least content and pleasure to the flesh. Carnal delights and spiritual are so contrary; the one so drossie and sordid, and the other so sublime and pure, that they will not well consist together; but the delights of the flesh do corrupt or weaken the spiritual delights.

5. Lastly Consider, what a *base unmanly* thing it is for a man to be a slave to his sensitive appetite. As truly as the horse was made to be ruled by the rider, and all the bruits to be under man; so was the appetite and all the senses made to be ruled by Reason; and no sense should be pleased till Reason do consent: a *beast* hath no rule for his eating and drinking but his appetite; and therefore *mans reason* is to moderate him: But a *man* hath a better guide then appetite or sense to follow: you should not eat a bit or drink a drop *meerly* because the *appetite* would have it, but *Reason* must be advised with, and God must give

give advice to Reason. A Swine that will drink whey till he burst his belly, is blameless, because he knew not the danger, and had not Reason to restrain him : But a man that hath Reason, and yet will eat, and drink, and sleep, and use the Creatures meerly to please the appetite of his flesh, is utterly unexcusable : What must the light of Reason be put out, or put under the cover of sensual concupiscence ? must a nature that is kin to Angels, be enslaved to that which is kin to beasts ? unworthy is he of the honour or glory of a *Saint*, that casteth away the honour of his *manhood*, and makes himself a very beast. What else doth that wretch, that when he seeth a dish before him that he loves, doth never ask whether it be wholesom or unwholesom, but eats it as an Horse doth his provender, meerly because his appetite would have it : Yea perhaps though he know, or be told that it is unwholesom, yet as long as it pleaseth his taste, he cares not ? And what else doth that wretch, that when he sees the cup, must needs be tasting : he loves it, and thats reason enough with him. What a base unmanly thing is it, (much more unchristian) to be a Slave to a fleshly appetite ! Would one of these Gentlemen-gluttons, Drunkards, or Whoremongers, or any of our voluptuous Epicures, that must needs have that they love, be contented to become a *servant to a Beast?* would you take a Dog or a Swine for your Master, and serve them, and obey them, and do what your bruitish Master would have you ? why whats the matter that many of our worshipful and honourable Beasts do not see that they do as bad ? What is your own fleshly sensual Appetite any better then that of a Beast ? A Dog hath as good a *sent* as you ; and a Swine hath as good a taste or sight as you, and also as strong a lust as you. What great difference is there betwixt the serving your *own* flesh and *anothers* ? your *own brutish* part, or any *other brute* that lives about you ? Wonderful ! if the favour of God be nothing with you, and if damnation be nothing with you, that yet you are insensible of your honour in the world, and that you that cannot put up a disgraceful word or blow, can yet put up at your own hands such a beastial indignity, as the subjecting of a Rational immortal soul, to that brutish flesh, which was made to be its servant !

Chap. XIX.

Self-interest, And 1. *Pleasure, And* 1. *Of the Taste to be denied.*

2. I Have told you what the *selfish Dispostition* is that must be mortified and denied; and now I must tell you what is the *selfish Interest* that must be denied: Having described *self-denial* from the *Faculties*, I must now describe it by its *Objects*.

The *selfish Interest* consisteth in this Trinity of Objects, *Pleasure, Profit, and Honour*, not spiritual, but carnal; not heavenly, but worldly Pleasure, Profit and Honour: sometime all these are comprehended in the word [*Pleasure*] alone; and then it is taken more comprehensively, and not only for sensual Pleasure, called voluptuousness, as it is here in this distribution. And sometime all is comprehended in the term [*world*] and *selfishness* in the word [*flesh*] the *world* being that harlot with which the flesh commits adultery. So 1 *Joh.* 2. 15, 16. [*Love not world, nor the things that are in the world. If any man Love the world, the Love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the Lust of the flesh, the Lust of the eyes, and the Pride of Life, is not of the Father, but is of the world: and the world passeth away, and the Lust thereof: but he that doth the will of God, abideth for ever.*] To these three heads therefore we shall reduce all that we have to say of this matter.

I. The *selfish, fleshly Pleasure* that must be denied, consisteth in these particulars following, which I shall but briefly touch, because they are so many. 1. One Principal part of *Sensuality* or *Self-interest*, consisteth in *meats and drinks* to please the Appetite. So far as these are taken to fit us for Gods service, and used to his Glory, so far they are sanctified, as before was said: but when they are meerly to Please the appetite, they are offered to an enemy, and are the fuel of lust. Do you see any thing that your Appetite desireth, whether meats or drinks, whether for quality

quality or quantity? Take it not, touch it not, meerly upon that account: but enquire whether it tend to the strengthening and fitting your bodies or minds for the service of God: and if so, take it; if not, let alone. If your appetite had rather have Wine then Beer, or strong Beer then small, take it not meerly upon that account: If your appetite would fain have one cup more, when nature hath as much as is profitable, deny that appetite. If your appetite would fain be tasting of any thing that is not for your health, deny that appetite. If it would fain have one bit more, when you have as much before as is wholesom or useful to you, deny that appetite: Or else you are guilty of *flesh pleasing*, and plain Gluttony.

Quest. *But is it not lawful at a feast to taste of another dish, or eat another bit, when I think that nature needs no more? what perplexities then will you cast men into, to know just how many morsels they may eat?*

Answ. It is gluttony and no better to take the creatures of God in vain, and sacrifice them to a devouring throat, which should be used only for his service. That which is a mans ultimate end is his God. What would you have plainer then express words of Scripture, that tell you that *whether you eat or drink, it must be all to the glory of God*, 1 Cor. 10. 31. and that the fleshly do *make their bellies their Gods*? Phil. 3. 18. And therefore when you have taken as much as suiteth with your end, the service and glory of God, you must not take more for *another* end, the pleasing of your fleshly desires. But for the scruples that you mention, about the just proportion, we need not be disquieted with them: For God hath given us sufficient means to direct us, to know what is for our good, and what is superfluous; and it is our duty in an even and constant way to use our Reason and keep as neer the due proportion as we can; and when we know that this is our desire and endeavour, it were a sin against God to trouble our selves with continual or causeless scruples or fears, lest we do exceed or miss the rule. For what can we do more, then go according to the best skill we have, and if for want of skill we should a little mistake, it is pardoned with the rest of our daily infirmities; and to trouble and distract our selves with causeless fears would more unfit us

for Gods service, then some degree of mistake in the proportion would do, and so would be as great a sin as that which we feared. And therefore our way is quietly and comfortably, without distracting fears or scruples, to do our best, and use our prudence with *self-denial*, and remember that we have to do with a Father that knows the flesh is weak when the spirit is willing. But yet wilfully to cast away one cup or one morsel, on the pleasing of our appetites, when it no way fits us for the service of God, and will do us no other good, this is not *self-denial* but sensuality.

Quest. *But nature knows best whats good for it self, and therefore that which it desireth is to be judged best: A Beast liveth as healthfully as a man, that obeyeth his appetite only. Is it not lawful to take either meat or drink on this account, that the Appetite is pleased with it?*

Answ. 1. Some Beasts would presently kill themselves in pleasing their appetites, if man that is Rational did not rule, restrain and moderate them. A Swine will burst himself with whey in half an hour. A Beast in new after-grass will surfet, if he be suffered. No Beast knows poyson from food, but would soon perish by it, in obeying his appetite. 2. And yet as a Beast hath no Reason, so he is better provided to live without Reason, then man is. His appetite is not so corrupted by sin as ours is! Original sin hath depraved and enraged our appetites. And if man had not more use for his reason then a Beast even in ordering his natural actions, God would not have given him reason to rule his appetite, and commanded him to use it herein. And who knows not that if man did follow his appetite alone as Beasts do, he were like to murder himself the next day or week, or at least in a very little space? The appetite would presently carry us to that for quality, or quantity, or both, that would cast us into mortal diseases and soon make an end of us: And in those diseases, the pleasing it usually would be certain death. And indeed this is a beastly doctrine, that man that hath reason to rule his sensual inclinations, should lay it by and please his appetite without it like a brute! what more do all Gluttons, and Drunkards, and Whoremongers, but follow their fleshly desires? And if the *desires* of the flesh might be followed, who would not

be

be such as they, in some measure? That which is *no sin* in a Beast, is a hainous sin in a man, because man hath reason to rule his appetite, and a Beast hath none; and therefore is not capable of sin. And for the body, its certain that most of the diseases in the world are bred and fed by the pleasing of the appetite; and I think that there's few that are laid in their graves, but this was the cause of it, though the ignorant know it not, and the sensual are loth to believe it.

And for the question, *whether we may not take any meat or drink purposely to please the appetite?* I answer, yes, as a means to fit us for duty: but not as your chief end. 1. Sometimes, especially in weak bodies, the very Pleasing of the Appetite doth recreate nature, and further strength. 2. And sometime the appetite shews what sort of food nature will best close with and concoct; so that as to the quality, if Reason have nothing against it, it hath something for it; because it is a sign that its like to be best digested, which is most desired. And so if you thus far follow the appetite, as a sign directing your reason what is best, and take nothing ultimately to please it, but by pleasing it to preserve the health or vigor of your bodies for Gods service; thus you may do and yet be *self-denying*: for this is not a sensual serving of your flesh. But if you will 1. Take that which reason tells you is unhealthful in quality; 2. Or that which reason tells you is either hurtful, or but needless and unprofitable in the quantity. 3. Or have mastered your reason so far by your appetite, that you will not believe that is hurtful or needless which you love, but judge what is good for you, meerly by your appetite, as a beast. 4. Or if you make the pleasing of your appetite your chief End, in any meat or drink that you take; all this is beastiality, sensuality, carnality, gulosity, and contrary to true moderation and *self-denyal*.

Live therefore like men and not like beasts; like Christians, and not like Atheists and Epicures: He hath as base a god as most of the vilest heathen Idolaters that makes his belly his god. He that cannot deny *himself* a delicious cup or morsel, would ill deny himself a Kingdom if it were made the bait of sin. He that will not displease his *appetite* in so small a matter, would

hardly

hardly leave his estate, or liberty, or life, if he were put to it, either to sin, or leave them. As he is a faithful servant to God indeed, that will not displease him in the smallest matter; so he is most fully obedient to the flesh, that cannot deny it the *least* thing that it desireth. Though I know that the smalness of the matter doth often so relax the cautelousness even of the godly, that they venture on a small thing who would not on a greater: yet even with them it is some aggravation of the sin, that they cannot bear so small a matter as the displeasing of their appetites in such a trifle: and that they cannot deny *themselves*, where they may do it at so cheap a rate; and that they have the hearts to displease God, and wrong their souls for a cup or a morsel which their appetite hath a mind to. He sets little by Heaven or the favour of God, that will venture it for so small a thing. It hath oft times abated my compassion to dying men, when I have known that their death was caused by a wilfull obeying their appetite against the perswasion of their Physitian; and be the person never so dear to me, I feel that there is somewhat in nature that inclineth us to consent to the sufferings of the *wilfull*, or abateth our pitty of them in their misery. It was an aggravation of *Adams* sin, that a forbidden morsel could entice him to venture on the wrath of God, and the ruine of himself and his posterity. And it will be a double aggravation of your sin, if you will take the same course, and take no warning by him, or by the sinning world, that hath followed him to this day [when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eye, and a tree to be desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof and did eat] *Gen.* 26. *Thus entered sin, and death by sin.*

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2. ANother part of *self-interest* to be denyed, is, the pleasing of lustful venereous inclinations. Not only in avoiding the gross act of adultery and fornication it self; but also in avoiding the pleasing of any of the senses by lascivious actions that lead to this: especially some men that are naturally prone to lust, have need to set a work both faith and reason, and sometime call for help from others to quench these dangerous hellish flames;

flames; For it is a sin that God hath spoken terribly against, and that so often that intimateth mans proneness to it, and expresseth Gods detestation of it. And seldom doth *Paul* rebuke it, but he reckoneth up the several kinds, that he may make it odious, and none may scape. Gal.5.19. *Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are, Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness,* &c. *of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the Kingdom of God.* The sins which he would not have the *Ephesians* name, are, [*fornication and all uncleaness, neither filthiness, nor fooliſh talking, nor jesting, which are not convenient: because no whoremonger, nor unclean person, nor covetous man, who is an Idolater, hath any inheritance in the Kingdom of Christ and of God*] so Col. 3.5,6. [*Mortifie therefore your members which are upon earth; fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence, and covetousness which is Idolatry; for which things sake the wrath of God cometh on the children of disobedience*] 1 Cor.6.9,10. [*Be not deceived; neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind,* &c. *shall inherit the Kingdom of God*] 1 Tim.1.10. *The Law is made for whoremongers, for them that defile themselves with mankind,* &c.] Heb.13 4. *Whoremongers and adulterers God will judge*] Read also 1 *Cor.* 5.11 *Matth.*15.19 *Heb.*12.16. 1 *Thes.*4.3. *Rom.* 1.28,29. &c. 1 *Cor.*6.13,18 & 10.8. *Jud.*7,8. *These filthy dreamers defile the flesh,* &c. 2 *Pet.*2.10,14. [*But chiefly them that walk after the flesh in the lust of uncleanness —— Having eyes full of Adultery and that cannot cease from sin*] Abhor therefore this filthy damnable sin, which God abhorreth. And to that end please not the flesh by any beginnings of it, or any thing that savoureth of it, or makes way to it. *Chambering and wantonness* are mentioned by the Apostle among the *fulfilling of the fleshly lusts, Rom.*13.13,14. *the allarements of the lusts of the flesh and wantonness* was the course of the wretched Apostates, 2 *Pet.* 2.18. 1 *Pet.* 4.3. *Eph* 4.19 2 *Cor.*12.21. Mar.7.22. And Christ himself hath told you, that [*he that looketh on a woman to lust after her, hath committed adultery already in his heart*] Mat. 5.28. Suffer not therefore your eye

to entice your hearts, by gazing on beauty or any alluring objects; touch them not, come not near them without neceſſity. The fire of luſt doth need no blowing up: but in ſome it needeth all that ever they can do to quench it. Fly therefore from the temptations and occaſions if you would eſcape; caſt not yourſelves upon opportunities of ſinning; Let temptations have as little advantage as you can. A weak Chriſtian may walk more evenly that flyeth from temptations, and keeps at a diſtance from that which would enſnare him, then a ſtrong Chriſtian that ſuffers the bait to be near him. *Davids* woful experience could tell you, what it is to give way to a wandring luſtful eye: when *Joſephs* reſolution may tell you what an advantage it is, to fly away and not to ſtand a parley with temptations. As ever you would ſcape this ſin, this horrible ſoul-deſtroying ſin, keep off from all opportunities of committing it, and live not with temptations near you: eſpecially take heed that you ſuffer not an unclean ſpirit to poſſeſs your thoughts; but caſt out the firſt impure cogitations with abhorrency. O the daily filthineſs that lodgeth in the thoughts and imaginations of ſome men! They can ſcarce look on a woman of any comlineſs, but they have preſently ſome filthy thought. If they attempted actual uncleanneſs, a chaſt perſon may eaſily reject them with deteſtation; but in this ſecret way of heart-filthineſs, they will commit fornication with whom they pleaſe, and as many as they pleaſe, and as often as they pleaſe; but the ruin and ſin are only their own. As you love the favour of God, the credit of the Goſpel, and the peace and ſalvation of your own ſouls, deny your ſelves not only the luſts of uncleanneſs, but of unchaſte behaviour, and wanton dalliance, and the filthineſs of your thoughts. For how unfit is that mind to converſe with God, and to be employed in holy ordinances, that cometh but newly from thinking of filthineſs, and feeding on luſt!

CHAP.

Chap. XX.

Wanton discourse, songs, to be deneyd.

3. Another part of *self-interest* or sensuality to be denyed, is, *the use of wanton filthy discourse, and of wanton books, and songs and ballads, commonly called Love songs.* As these are the fruits of vain minds that do invent them, so do they breed and feed the like vanity in others. Indeed they are the Devils Psalms and Liturgy, in which he is served with mirth and jollity, by persons of corrupt and sensual minds. They that will not be at the pains to learn a Catechism, will learn a wanton song or ballad, which one would think should be as hardly learnt. When we desire them to learn any thing that is necessary to their salvation, they tell us that they are no scholars, and they have weak memories, and they cannot learn. But they can learn an idle tale, or a filthy song, though they are no schollars, and though their memory be weak. Their weak memories are strong enough to keep any thing that's naught; like a riddle that will not hold the corn, but it will hold the straws and rubbish; or like a sive that will not hold the milk, but it will hold the hairs and filth. And so much greater is this sin then many others, because it is studyed for, and laboured for, and therefore is committed purposely, resolvedly, and with delight, and not as some other sins which men are tempted to by sudden passions or surprisals! What abundance of children are set to school to the Devil, and must bestow many dayes and hours in learning their lessons! and when they have learned them, he must hear them say them over, usually more then once a day. As they are at work in their shops or fields, they are at it, either by wanton songs, or ribbald filthy talk: yea they be not ashamed to sing them as they go about the streets: Mark this, you that are the servants of Christ! will you evermore be ashamed of your Master or of his holy service! will will you be ashamed to confess him in the open streets, or to be heard at Prayer, or reading, or singing the Praise of God in your

houses; when the Devils servants are trained up in their very childhoood to sing his Psalms in the open streets, and publikely to serve him without fear or shame! May not a man conjecture by their education, what trade they are intended for? They that serve an apprenticeship to a trade, are sure intended to live upon it. One would think by the talk and the songs of many of our children in the streets, that the parents had bound them apprentices to a brothelhouse, and intended that their trade should be fornication, whoredom, and all uncleanness! why else do they learn the art of talking of it, but in order to the art of practising it? Sure I am, they are the apprentices of Satan: and a doleful case it is to think on; that as the Turks do take the children of Christians, and breed them up to be their Army of Janizaries, to fight against Christians as their stoutest Souldiers, when they come to age; so the Devil and their own parents do take the Children that in baptism were dedicated once to Christ, and listed under his command, and they teach them to fight against Christ, by cursing, and railing, and swearing, and mocking at Godliness, and by bawdy songs and ribbaldry. Christ telleth us *that out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh*; and therefore they cannot in reason blame us, if we judge of their hearts by their tongues: for though the tongue be too often better then the heart, it is seldom worse. And surely if many of our wretched neighbours may be judged of by this rule of Christ, we must needs conclude that they have lustful, filthy adulterous hearts? what else can we think of them when their discourse and songs are filthy, but that their hearts are filthy? Christ hath warranted us to conclude, that rotten speeches come from the abundance of a rotten heart. Young people, I beseech you regard your credit, if you regard not your salvation. Will you openly proclaim in the ears of the world that you are trained soldiers of the Devil, learning to be whores and whoremongers, or that you have lust and whoredom in your hearts? Is it your meaning to tell this to all the town? what doth it in your mouths, if it be not in your hearts? will you not judge by a mans language what Country man he is? If he speak Welsh, you'l think he is a Welsh man; if Irish, you'l think he is an

Irish

Irish man; if English, you'l conjecture he is an Englishman: And if you speak the language of harlots and brothelhouses, what can we think but that you are such yourselves, or at least are learning to be such? For shame do not so disgrace your parents that breed you up, and the houses that you live in; what may folks think and say, when they hear you talk filthily, and singing filthy songs, will they not think that you have Adulterers or filthy persons to your parents, that teach or suffer you to learn such things? and that they are bringing you up for their own profession? will they not think that you live in whorehouses, and not in Christian families? Do not for shame proclaim this suspicion of your parents, or the families you dwell in, in the hearing of the world, unless you think it an honour to be harlots. It would make the ears of a modest person to glow on his head, to hear the ribbaldry that is ordinary in some prophane families; especially in many Inns and Alehouses, where the quality of the company and the nature of the employment is such from whence no better can be expected.

Let all that would be accounted Christians, deny and abhorr this part of *sensuality* in themselves and theirs. Again consider the command of God [*But fornication, and all uncleanness, or Covetousness, let it not once be named amongst you, as becometh Saints: neither filthiness, nor foolish talking, nor jesting, which are not convenient; but rather giving of thanks*: Eph. 5. 3, 4. & 4. 29, 30. [*Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers; and grieve not the holy spirit of God.*] Mark here, how such filthy speech is called [*Corrupt*] Communication, or rotten; like Carrion in a ditch, which should cause all that pass by to stop their noses. And yet this is our peoples sport: *what* say these wretches, *may we not jest and be merry, when we mean no harm, without all this ado?* Have you no honester mirth then this? nor no more cleanly jests then these? will you feed upon that which is Carrion or corrupt, and make it your Junkets to delight your palat? will you make merry with that which God condemneth, and threatneth to shut you out of his Kingdom for, and makes the mark of the unsanctified, and chargeth you not once to name it, that is, not

without distaste and rebuke. Have you nothing but filthiness, and the service of the Devil, and the wrath of God to play with, and to make merry with. Prov. 10.23. [*It is a sport to a fool to do mischief*] I may well say of this, as *Solomon* of another sin, *Prov.* 26.18,19. [*As a mad man that casteth firebrands, arrows and death, so is the man that deceiveth his neighbour, and saith, Am not I in sport?*] Its mad sporting with sin, especially to choose it purposely for a recreation; and specially such an odious sin as this that infecteth others, and banisheth all gracious edifying conference, and increaseth the corruption of the mind, and prepareth people to actual whoredom, self pollution, and abhominable uncleanness: for thoughts and words are but preparatives to deeds.

Chap. XXI.

Idle and worldly talk to be denyed.

4. ANother part of *sensuality* to be denyed, is, *Idle and worldly talk, which most men make their daily recreation.* It is not to be made light of that Christ himself hath told you, that *for every idle word men shall give account in the day of Judgement*, Matth. 12.36,37. such an account as that they shall be charged on you as sins; and if they be not repented of, and pardoned through the blood of Christ, they will be your condemnation as well as greater sins. By idle words is meant, not only all wicked, and all lying words, which are vain in a high degree and worse; but also useless unprofitable speeches that tend not to any good, and which you have no call to speak, *Tit.* 3 9. And that which the Apostle calls [*fooliſh talking*] Eph. 5.4. When that Christian wisdom is left out that should guide and season our speech, and direct it to some good end: especially when by vain jesting men will make fools of themselves to please others: or when they lay by Christian gravity, and by jesting affect to become ridiculous, *Eph* 5.4. much more when men jest with holy things, and speak unreverently, contemptuously or

or ſcornfully of the matters of God, which is impiety in an high degree: The ſame may be ſaid of proud boaſting words, and of multitude of words, even when the matter is good, but the multitude of words unſeaſonable and unprofitable; as alſo of raſh unconſidered words, that tend to ſtir up ſtrife and paſſion: as alſo cenſuring, back-biting, reproach, flattery, diſſembling, and many the like: but the thing that I principally ſpeak of now, is the pleaſing of a mans *ſelf* by a courſe of idle unprofitable talk. And alas how common is this ſin! Not only the fooliſh multitude are guilty of it, but perſons of judgement and gravity and reputation. How many may you come in company with, before you ſhall have any edifying Communication, that tends to miniſter grace to the hearers: vanity is become the common breath of the greateſt part. What the better can any man be for their diſcourſe, unleſs by taking warning by them, to avoid the vanity which we hear them guilty of? even antient perſons with whom the words of wiſdom ſhould be found, (*Job.* 12. 12.) and who ſhould be examples unto youth, are yet given up to idle talk; and an old ſtory is more ſavoury with them then heavenly diſcourſe: even Parents and Maſters that ſhould be examples to their families, will in their hearing multiply idle words, as if they would teach them to be vain as they are; when alas, the ſouls of thoſe about them have need of other manner of diſcourſe; and its another task that God hath ſet them, *Deut.* 6. 6, 7, 8. & 11. 18, 19 whence is it that Children learn a courſe of idle fooliſh talking, more then of their own parents? For one word of God, and the doctrine of the Goſpel, and the matters of ſalvation, that their families hear from moſt of them, they hear an hundred, yea a thouſand of the world and of unprofitable things. Had God but the Tithe of their words, we ſhould account them very pious. And they that cannot ſpare him the tithe of their words, I doubt do not allow him the Tithe of their affections, and would not allow him the tithe of their increaſe, if they could tell how to keep it. Not but that with ſome perſons, that are called to much worldly buſineſs, more then ten parts of their daily ſpeeches may lawfully be about the creatures: But then even thoſe with godly men are ultimately for God, and ſo are ſanctified,

ſanctified, and not unprofitable: and alſo they are glad to redeem what time they can for ſpeeches of an higher and more excellent ſubject.

And the commonneſs of this ſin of idle talk, yea with many that we hope are godly, doth make me think that its thought to be a ſmaller matter then it is; and I doubt this conceit is it that makes it to be ſo common. And therefore I ſhall here give you ſome of the Aggravations of this ſin, that you may hereafter judge of it as it is, and not be encouraged in it by falſe apprehenſions.

1. A cuſtom of vain words, is a ſign of a vain and empty mind: were the heart but full of better things, the tongue would be employed in better ſpeeches. Either the head, or heart, or both is empty and vain, in that meaſure as the tongue is vain, *Eccleſ.* 5.3. [*A dream cometh through the multitude of buſineſs, and a fools voice is known by multitude of words*] Eccleſ. 10 12. [*The words of a wiſe mans mouth are gracious; but the lips of a fool will ſwallow up himſelf*] Eccleſ. 10.14. [*A fool is full of words*] And therefore *Solomon* oppoſeth the tongue of the juſt and the heart of the wicked, Prov. 10.20. [*The tongue of the juſt is as choice ſilver: the heart of the wicked is little worth*] See Prov. 17. 27, 28. Pſal. 37. 30, 31. [*The mouth of the righteous ſpeaketh wiſdom, and his tongue talketh of judgement*] and whence is this [*The Law of his God is in his heart: none of his ſteps ſhall ſlide.*] It is a ſign that a man hath little *feeling* of the greatneſs of his own ſin, of the greatneſs of Gods Love in Chriſt, of the greatneſs of the joy that is ſet before him, of the greatneſs of duty that lyeth on him, when he can ſpend ſo much of his time in talking of meer vanity. You cannot get a dying man, or a man that's taken up with any great important buſineſs, to jeſt and prate with you of idle matters. Its only alienated idle minds that can give way to a courſe of idle words: nay it is a ſign that Conſcience is not ſo tender as it ought to be, when men can knowingly go on in a courſe of ſin: Doth not Conſcience ask you what you are doing, and whether this diſcourſe do tend to edification, and the cheriſhing of grace? What Conſciences have you that look no better after your tongues, but will let them wander

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so long after vanity, before they call them to account. Do you remember Gods presence, and withall his holiness and jealousie? Can you talk so idly and God stand by, and hear every word, and put down all? How can you be so contemptuously fearless of his presence?

2. The tongue of man is a noble member, called *our glory*, Psal. 30.12. & 57.8. given us for the Praise of our great Creator, and for other high and noble ends. And should it be abased and abused to idleness and vanity? you will not take the cloaths that adorn your bodies to cloath a Maukin, or sweep the Oven, or wipe your dishes with: and why should you use your tongues to filth or base unprofitable things, that are given you for the noblest uses in the world, even the honour of God, the edifying of your brethren, the reproof of sin, and your own salvation?

3. Consider, what abundance of great and needful imployment you have for your tongues, and then tell me, whether you should spare them to idleness and vanity? O what work hath that little member to perform! what matters have you to mind and talk of? what transcendent subjects? what matter of highest excellency, and greatest necessity? you have a life of sin to look back upon and lament: you have many a sin to confess to others: you need much help against temptations, and for the strengthening and exercise of your graces: what need to make sure of your title to salvation? and to prepare for death, and to get ready the graces that you must use in your last necessities? and yet have you words to spare for vanity? What abundance of poor souls about you are ignorant, hard-hearted, sensual, covetous, empty of grace, in a state of death, and need all that ever you can do for their recovery, and all too little: and yet can you find in your heart to talk with them of vain unprofitable things? Alas Sirs, most of the persons about you are within a step of death, and going to the bar of God, and want nothing but one stroak of death to make them past help, and send them to damnation: And can you find in your hearts to talk idly with such men? O cruel unmerciful people, that regard no more your neighbours miseries! If you came to them at the point of death, or if their houses were on fire,

would you sit down and tell them an old tale, or talk of the weather, or this trifle, or that? what an absurdity would this be, and insensibility of your brethrens case? And will you do so in a case ten thousand fold greater? Can you find in your heart to stand jesting and prating with a poor unregenerate man that is within a step of hell? Have you not more need to call to him to look about him in time, and to remember eternity, and to turn and live? If you see but the nakedness of the poor, or the sores of a Cripple, it should move you to compassion: And will not mens ignorance and ungodliness move you? Their miseries cry aloud to you for pitty, though themselves are silent, [O help to save us from sin and hell, as you have the hearts of men] and yet will you stop your ears, and fall a prating and jesting with them? you rob them of the means that God hath commanded you to use for their recovery. God hath commanded, that [*the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom, teaching and admonishing one another* —— *Col.*3.16. yea that you *daily exhort one another while it is called to day, lest any be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin*, Heb.3.13.

Nay you have the great mysteries of the Gospel to discourse of with the Godly; the glorious things of everlasting life to make mention of to one another, yea you have the high praises of God to advance in the world, and all his blessed attributes to magnifie, and all his glorious works to praise, and all the experiences of your own souls to lay open, and his many and great mercies towards you to admire and thankfully confess. And yet have you leasure for idle talk? For *number* of objects, you have God and all his works in heaven and earth (that are revealed) to talk of; you have all his providences, all his judgements, all his mercies, and all his word? And is not this field large enough for your tongue to walk in, but you must seek out more work in vanity it self? For Greatness, you have the greatest things in all the world to mind and talk of: For necessity, you have the matters of your own and other mens salvation to discourse of: For excellency, you have God and his Image, and works, and waies, and heaven it self to talk of: For delightfulness, you have the sweetest objects in the world, even

even goodneſs *it ſelf*, ſalvation, and the way to it, to be the matter of your diſcourſe. And leſt one thing ſhould weary you, you have a world of variety to employ your ſpeeches on; even God, and all his works, and word, and waies before-mentioned. And is it not a ſhame to talk of vanity, yea to go ſeek for recreation in vanity, while all theſe ſtand by, and offer themſelves to be the ſubjects of your wiſe, and fruitful, and delightfulleſt diſcourſe: Conſider whether this be wiſe or equal dealing.

4. Moreover a courſe of idle talk, is a thief that robs us of our precious time. And he that knows what God is, or what duty is, or what his ſoul is, or what everlaſting joy or torment is, will know that time is a commodity of greater worth then ſo contemptuouſly to be caſt away for nothing. O remember when thou art next in idle talk, Did God make thee for this? doth he continue thee among the living, and keep thee out of hell, and yet prolongeth thy days, that thou ſhouldſt waſte thy time in idleneſs and vanity? Haſt thou ſo many ſins to mortifie, and ſo many other works to do, which heaven or hell lyeth on, and ſo ſhort and uncertain a time to do them in; and yet haſt thou leaſure for idle talk?

5. Moreover, this ſin is ſo much the greater, becauſe it is not a rare or ſeldom ſin, but frequently committed and continued in. It is not like the ſin of *David* or *Noah*, that though greater, yet was but once committed: But this is made great by the number and continuance. How many thouſand idle words have you been guilty of in your time?

6. And it is a ſin that tendeth to greater ſins. For idle words are the ordinary paſſage to backbiting, railing, lying, and contentious words, [Prov. 10. 19. *In the multitude of words there wanteth not ſin: but he that refraineth his lips is wiſe*] Thus *a fools lips enter into contention*, Prov. 18. 6. [*His mouth is his deſtruction, and his lips are the ſnare of his ſoul*] Eccleſ. 5. 7. *In the multitude of dreams, and many words, are divers vanities: but fear thou God*] Eccleſ. 10. 12, 13. [*The Lips of a fool will ſwallow up himſelf; the beginning of the words of his mouth is fooliſhneſs, and the end of his talk is madneſs*] Idleneſs is the beginning, but worſe then idleneſs is the end.

7. It is a sin that habituateththe speaker and hearers both to vanity: use makes us disposed to that which we use. It will grow strange to you to speak of better things, when you are used to vanity. And the use of hearing you, is an exceeding wrong to the souls of the hearers. A small matter confirmeth such bad hearts as the most have, in the vanity that they are in. You cast water on their graces and your own, if there were any. If any of them had better thoughts, your idle talk doth drown and divert them.

8. And it is a sin that hindreth abundance of Edification that holy conference might bring. Its a precious thriving course for Christians to be communicating experiences, and declaring the excellencies and loving-kindness of God, and exciting one another: and this you lay by, and turn to vanity. Nay perhaps some other that is in the company may be purposed to set upon such profitable discourse, and your idle talk doth hinder them, and suppress the exercise of Gods graces for your good. At least there may be much precious matter in them, that wants but vent, and if you would but begin, it may be poured forth as precious oyntment. Many wise and able men are too backward in beginning edifying discourse, that yet are exceeding fruitful when you have once set them awork. And idle talk is the hinderer of this.

9. And it is a very fruitless sin. You offend God for nothing. What get you by an hours idle talk? or what have you to tempt you to it?

10. And it is a wilful sin, and usually accompanied with much Impenitency, which makes it much the greater. Men use not to lament it, and call themselves to account for it, and say, what have I done? but go on in it as if it were no sin.

And now you see the greatness of the sin, I beseech you make more conscience of it then you have done. And that you may avoid it, observe these brief Directions.

Direct. 1. Labour for understanding in the matters of God: for thats it that must furnish the tongue, and prevent vanity, *Prov.* 11. 12. & 10. 19. A foolish head will have a foolish tongue.

Dir. 2. Get a deep impression and lively sense of the matters of

of God upon the heart. For a man never talks heartily, that talks not from the Heart. He that is full of the Love of God, poſſeſſed of the Spirit of Chriſt, taken up with the riches of grace and of glory, will ſcarce want matter to talk of, nor an holy diſpoſition to ſet him a work: For the Word of God will be as a fire in his heart; he will be weary with forbearing, till the flames burſt out, *Pſal.* 119. 11. & 40. 8. & 57. 7. & 119. 111. & 39. 3. *Jer.* 20. 9. The hearty experienced Chriſtian is uſually the fruitful Chriſtian in word and deed.

Dir. 3. Preſerve a tender conſcience, that may check you when you begin to turn to vanity. The fear of God is the ſouls preſerver, *Pſal.* 19. 9. *Prov.* 16. 6. & 23. 17.

Dir. 4. Walk as before the Lord: Live, and think, and ſpeak as in his preſence. If the preſence of an Angel would call you off from idle words, what then ſhould the preſence of God himſelf do! Dare you run on in idle fooliſh prating when you remember that he heareth you?

Dir. 5. Keep out of the company of idle talkers, leſt they entangle you in the ſin: unleſs when you have a call to be among them, *Prov.* 13. 20. We are apt to let our diſcourſe run with the ſtream.

Dir. 6. When you are with the ungodly, maintain in you a believing compaſſion to their ſouls; And then the ſenſe of their condition will heal your diſcourſe.

Dir. 7. Provide matter for holy diſcourſe of purpoſe beforehand. As you will not travel without money in your purſes to defray your charges; ſo you ſhould not go into company without a proviſion of ſuch matter as may be profitable for the company that you may be caſt upon. Study and contrive how to ſuit your ſpeeches to the Edification of others, or elſe to draw good from others, even as Miniſters ſtudy for their Sermons.

Dir. 8. Speak not till you have conſidered what is like to be the effect of it, and weighed the quality of the perſon, and other circumſtances to that end. Do not ſpeak firſt, and conſider after, but firſt think, and then ſpeak.

Dir. 9. Be ſtill ſenſible of the worth of time and opportunity, and then you will be as loth to caſt it away on idle talk, as a good husband will be to caſt away his money for nothing.

Dir. 10. Keep up a sense of your own necessity, which may provoke you to be better husbands of your tongues and time: and engage those you converse with, to mind you of your idle talk, and take you off it as soon as you begin.

Dir. 11. See that your heart, and tongue, and all be Absolutely devoted to God; and then you will question any by expense of words: and [*Whatsoever you do in word or deed, you will do all in the name of Christ, and to the glory and praise of God*] Col. 3. 17. 1 Cor 10. 31.

Dir. 12. Be Resolute for God, and be not ashamed to own him and his cause. A sinful bashfulness hinders much good. Observe these Directions for this part of *self-denial.*

Chap. XXII.

False Stories, Romances, and other tempting Books.

5. ANother point of sensuality to be denied, is, *The reading or hearing of false and tempting Books, and those that only tend to please an idle fancy, and not to edifie.* Such as are Romances, and other feigned histories of that nature, with books of tales, and jests, and fooliſh complements, with which the world so much aboundeth, that there's few but may have admittance to this Library of the Devil. Abundance of old feigned Stories, and new Romances are in the hands, especially of Children, and idle Gentlemen, and filthy lustful Gallants, or empty persons that savour not greater matters, but have spirits sutable to such gawds as these. But if they were only toyes, I should say the less; but, having seen by long observation the mischief of them, I desire you to note it in these few particulars.

1. They ensnare us in a world of guilt, by drawing us to the neglect of those many, those great and necessary things that all of us have to mind and study. O for a man or woman, that is under a load of sin, unassured of pardon and salvation, that is neer to death, and unready to die, to be seen with a Story or Romance in their hand! what a gross incongruity is this? Its fitter

ter the Book of God should be in your hand: Its that which you must live by and be judged by. There's much that you are yet ignorant of, which you have more need to be acquainted with then Fables. Are you not ignorant of an hundred truths that you should know, that God hath revealed to further your salvation: and can you lay them all by to read Romances? Are you travailing towards another world with a Play-book in your hand? O that you did but know what greater matters you have to mind and to do? Do all that you have to do first, thats of a thousand times more worth, and weight, and need; and then, come to me, and I will answer your Objections, *What harm is it to read a Play-book?* First, Quench the fire of sin and wrath that is kindled in your souls; and see that you understand the Laws of God, and read over those profitable Treatises of Divines, that the world aboundeth with, and your souls more need, and then tell me, what mind or time you have for Fables.

2. Moreover it dangerously bewitcheth and corrupteth the minds of yong and empty people, to read these books. Nature doth so close with them, and delight in them, that they presently breed an inordinacy of affection, and steal away the heart from God, and his holy Word and wayes. It cannot be that the Love and delights of the heart can be let out on such trash as these, and not be taken off from God and the most needful things. That is the most dangerous thing to the soul, that works it self deepest into the affections, and is most delighted in instead of God. And therefore I may well conclude that Play-books, and History-Fables, and Romances, and such like, are the very poyson of youth, the prevention of grace, the fuel of wantonness and lust, and the food and work of empty, vicious, graceless persons; and its great pity that they be not banished out of the Commonwealth.

3. Moreover they rob men of much precious time, in which much better work might be done: much precious knowledge might be got while they are exercised in these Fables. Those hours must be answered for: And there is not the worst of you but then had rather be able to say, [*I spent those dayes and hours in prayer, and meditating on the life to come, and reading the Law and Gospel of Christ, and the Books which his Servants wrote for my*

my instruction] then to say, [*I spent it in reading Love-books, and Tale-books, and Play-books*] All these considered, I beseech you throw away these pestilent vanities, and take them not in your hands, nor suffer them in the hands of your children, or in your houses, but burn them as you would do a conjuring book, and as they did, *Acts* 19. 19. that so they may do no mischief to any others.

CHAP. XXIII.

Vain Sports and Pastimes to be denied.

6. ANother part of *fleshly interest* to be denied, is, *vain sports and pastimes, and all unnecessary Recreations.* For this also is one of the harlots that the flesh is defiled with.

Recreations are lawful and useful if thus qualified. 1. If the matter of them be not forbidden: For there's no sporting with sin. 2. If we have an holy Christian end in them, that is, to fit our bodies and minds for the service of God: and do not do it principally to please the flesh. If without dissembling our hearts can say, *I would not meddle with this recreation; If I thought I could have my body and mind as well strengthened and fitted for Gods service without it.* 3. If we use not recreations without need, as to the said End; nor continue them longer then they are useful to that End; and so do not cast away any of our precious time on them in vain. 4. If they be not uncivil, excessively costly, cruel, or accompanied with the like unlawful accidents. 5. If they contain not more probable incentives to vice then to vertue: as to Covetousness, Lust, Passion, Prophanness, &c. 6. If they are not like to be more *hurtful* to the souls of *others that joyn with us*, then *profitable to us.* 7. If they be not like to do more hurt by offending any that are weak or dislike them, then good to us that use them. 8. If they be used seasonably, in a time that they hinder not greater duties. 9. If we do it not in company unfit for us to joyn with. 10. Especially if we make a right choice of Recreations, and when divers are before us, we take the best; that which is least offensive, least expensive of time

time and cost, and which best furthereth the health of our bodies, with the smallest inconvenience.

These Rules being observed, Recreations are as lawful as sleep, or food, or Physick.

But, alas, they are made another thing by the sensual, ungodly world. Sometime they must sport themselves with sin it self, in the abuse of Gods Name, and Servants, and Creatures: Tipling and prophane Courses are some mens chiefest recreations: And though the Law of the Land forbid most of their sports, and the Law of God commandeth them to obey all the Laws of men that are not against the Law of God, yet this is a matter of nothing to their consciences. And let the *matter* be never so lawful, they make all impious by a carnal *end*. Its none of their Intention to strengthen and fit themselves for the service of God, and an holy, righteous life, by their recreations: but its meerly because their fancy and flesh is pleased in them: Even as the Drunkard, Glutton, or Whoremonger, that have no higher end then Pleasure, & can give you no better an account why they feed their lust, but because they Love it, and its their delight: just so is it with sportful youths and gallants. How few of many thousands can you come to that are at Cards, or Dice, or dancing, that can truly say, they would not do any of this but for God, and to fit themselves for his service? Did you ever know such a one? I believe in some better kind of Recreations you may know some such; but scarce in these. Alas this sin is not of so small a stature as too many impenitent souls imagine. Its one of the crying sins of the Land, and I believe one that brought down the vengeance of the late war upon us: and yet it is not half cured after all. The Gentry of *England* that should have been educated in Learning and the fear of God, and been the examples of the people in temperance and holiness, have been lamentably brutified and drowned in this (with other parts of gross) sensuality. Instead of serious Prayer, and holy Conference, and Instructing of their Families, Cards and Dice took up the time, and cursing and swearing were the common attendants of them: and their Children and Servants learned of them, and took the same course. They bestowed more time in these, and in hunting, hawking, bowling, cocking, Stage-playes, and such like, then

they did in the serious worshipping of God; yea then they did in the works of any lawful calling: For indeed they lived as without a Calling, doing very little else but rise, and dress them and complement those about them, and drink, and eat, and so to their sports at home or abroad, and then to eating and drinking again, and so to their vain discourses, and so to their beds again: and this was the ordinary course of their lives: *They sate down to eat and drink, and rose up to play*, Exod. 32. 6. 1 Cor. 10 7. In the sins of *Sodom* did they live, *Pride, fulness of bread and idleness*, Ezek. 16. 49. They trod the steps of him that Christ had told them, did cry in vain for a drop of water to cool his tongue, *Luke* 16. 19. gallantly cloathed, and fared deliciously every day (or sumptuously.) Their whole life almost was but a sacrifice to their flesh, to their belly, their fancies and their lusts: Till God broke in upon them in his wrath, and found them another employment, and shortened their store, and diminished their full estates and brought them iuto contempt and trouble; and yet how common is the sin to this day? Isa. 5. 11, 12, 13. [*Wo unto them that rise up early in the morning that they may follow strong drink, that continue till night, till wine inflame them; and the Harp and the Viol, the Tabret and Pipe, and Wine are in their feasts; but they regard not the work of the Lord, nor consider the operation of his hands: therefore my people are gone into captivity, because they have no knowledge, and their honourable men are famished, and their multitude dried up with thirst: therefore Hell hath enlarged her self, and opened her mouth without measure, and their glory, and their multitude, and their pomp, and he that rejoyceth shall descend into it,*] Amos 6. 1, 4, 5, 6. *Woe to them that are at ease in Zion,* —— *that stretch themselves on their Couches, and eat the Lambs out of the flock, and the Calves out of the stall, that chant to the sound of the Viol, and invent to themselves instruments of musick* —— *that drink Wine in Bowls, and annoint themselves with the chief oyntments: but they are not grieved for the affliction of* Joseph.]

The precious time that this sort of men lay out in their needless sports and recreations, is more worth then all their estates; and if their sin had no other aggravation but this, I confess I should

should take it for a far greater sin then any that thieves are usually hang'd for at the Gallows! what! for men that have received more from God then others, and are obliged more to him, and are capable of doing him more eminent service, for such as these to live like Epicures! and when they are hastening to an endless life, to waste the most, yea almost all this precious time in Flesh-pleasing sensuality! I think it is one of the greatest sins in the world! And no wonder that Christ made such choice of such an one as these, to acquaint them who they are that shall be damned, *Luke* 16. And if Conversion make not a wonderful change on them, they must look undoubtedly to speed as he; and to have the same account of the cause of their misery [*Son, remember that thou in thy life-time receivedst thy good things, and likewise* Lazarus *evil things: but now he is comforted, and thou art tormented*] Luke 16. 25.

Abundance of them bestowed more upon Hawks and Dogs, then would have maintained many poor families: And play for large summs at Cards, and Dice, and Cockings, and Horse-races. Coveteousness, and luxury, and passion, and swearing, and cursing, were the virtues that their sports did exercise: and others must be their companions in the same impieties, that they perish not alone. Unmerciful and oppressing they are in their very sports, treading down the hedges and corn of poor men, in following their game, and never making them reparation for their loss, but raging at them if they do but complain. No fitter company for them, then the most impious Swearers, and ribbald filthy Speakers, and the like: who was offended at it, they cared not; but made it an additional part of their sport, to cast a scorn at those that durst not and would not be as bad as they. And all this is, when they have variety of civil, cheap, inoffensive recreations at hand, which migh better have fitted a Christians end.

And the youthful part of the vulgar, are, in their degree, of the same spirit with those Epicures, and of the like practice, as far as their estates and leisure will allow them. Witness the eagerness of the rabble in following after Wakes, and May-games, Cock-fightings, Dancing, Dice, and Cards, and such like exercises. And more pleasure they have in these then in Prayer, or

Gods Praises, or holy Instructions, or Conferences. As much as the most sordid Whoremonger or Drunkard is enslaved in his proper flesh-pleasing sin, so much are our voluptuous youth and others addicted to gaming, sports and pastimes, and enslaved to this flesh-pleasing sin of theirs. Ah poor people! Doth time run on so fast, and are you hasting to the dreadful bar of God: and do you want *pastime?* Is your work so great, and your time so short and utterly uncertain; and yet must you hunt about for *pastime?* Must it go with you in heaven or hell for ever as you spend this hasty inch of time, and yet have you dayes or hours to spare for needless recreation? O what a cursed thing is sin, that can so bereave men of the use of reason, in that one thing for which their reason was given them! Yea we can scarce convince these poor deluded souls, that they do amiss; but they say, [*What harm is there in cards or dice, or hunting, or bowling, or such like recreations? How shall we live without recreation? Answ.* But is there no harm in needless flesh-pleasing, and in the loss of precious time, to men that are ready to step into eternity? O that ever men should make such a question? Suppose your recreations were the lawfullest in the world, in their own nature? Can there be a greater villany, then to set your hearts on them, and make a God of them, and cast away precious hours on them, in using them needlesly? Recreations are your physick, or your sawce; and therefore must not become your food, nor made a meal of? They are only as whetting to the mower, which must never be used but when there's need: To spend half the day in needless whetting, deserves no wages. O did you know but your work, and time, and what's before you, you would be better husbands; and then you might so contrive your business, as to lose no time in recreation. For either your calling puts you on the labour of the mind, as Students, or of the body, as labouring men. If study be your calling, you need no exercise of recreation but for your bodies; for variety of studies is the best or sufficient for the mind: And two hours walking is bodily recreation enough in a day, for almost any student that is in a capacity to labour: And if you be labouring men, or your calling lie in bodily motion, then you need no recreation for your bodies

bodies beſides your Callings, but only for your mind: And if you love God and his Word, what better Recreation for your minds can you deviſe, then thinking of the Love of God in Chriſt, and meditating on the Law of God, *Pſal.* 1. 2. and calling upon him, and rejoycing in his praiſes, and the Communion of his Saints? Is not *a day in his Courts, better then a thouſand any where elſe?* The Spirit of God by *David* ſaid ſo, *Pſal.* 84. 10. But alas it is this unmortified *fleſh*, and tyrannizing ſenſuality that blindeth you, that you cannot ſee the truth: or elſe all this would be as plain to you as the high way.

Chap XXIV.

Vain Company to be denied.

7. ANother ſenſual vice to be denied, is, *A love to vain ungodly company.* This is a ſin that I think none but utterly graceleſs men are much carried away with. For the Godly are all *taught of God to love one another*, 1 Theſ. 4. 9. and to *delight in the Saints as the moſt excellent on Earth*, Pſal. 16. 2, 3. and to take pleaſure in their communion: and to look on the ungodly with a differencing belief, as fore-ſeeing their everlaſting miſery, if they return not: ſo that it is the ungodly that I have now to ſpeak to. Some fall in love with the company of good fellows, as they call them: and ſome love the company of harlots; and ſome of gameſters; and moſt of merry pleaſant companions, and men that are of their own diſpoſition: and the love of ſuch company, tiſeth them to the frequent committing of the ſin. They would not go to gaming but for company: They would not go to the Alehouſe but for company: and when they are there, perhaps they will ſwear, and drink, and mock at godlineſs for company. But are you willing alſo to go to hell for company? Is the company of thoſe ſinners, better then the company of God, and his favour? were it not better be that while with him in prayer, or about his work? If you love a tipling fellow better then God, ſpeak out, and ſay ſo plainly, and never

never dissemble any more, nor say that you love God above all, or that you are Christians. Have you more delight in the Company of them that would entice to sin, then in the Company of the godly that would draw you from it? This is a most certain mark, that yet you are the children of the Devil, and in a state of damnation. It is not possible for a sanctified child of God to do so. See the description of the man that shall be saved in *Psal.* 15. *vers.* 4. [*In his eyes a vile person is contemned, but he honoureth them that fear the Lord*] Birds of a feather will flock together. The company which you love, shews what courses you love, and what you are. You delight in the company of those that Christ will judge as his enemies: and how then will he judge of you? you delight most in the company of those notorious fools, that know not the plainest and needfullest things in all the world? that know not that God is better then the world, and holiness then sin; and know not the way of their own salvation. If you are content to have the company of the ungodly for ever, you may take it here. But if you would not dwell in hell with them, do not go on in sin with them. O when you shall see those very men arrested by death, and haled at the bar of God, and cast into damnation, then you will have no mind of their company? Then, O that you could but say, that you were none of them. Like a man that is enticed by thieves to to joyn with them: but when the hue and cry overtakes them, and they are apprehended, how glad would he be then to be from among them! I tell you sinners, if grace recover you, you shall wish in the sorrow of your hearts that you had never seen the faces of those men that enticed you to evil: but if grace do not recover you, you shall wish ten thousand times in Hell that you had never seen their faces: but then your wishes will be in vain. In the name of God bethink your selves, whether your companions can bear you out at last, and save you from the wrath of God, and warrant your Salvation? Nay whether they can save themselves; Alas you know they cannot: God saith, *If you live after the flesh, ye shall die,* Rom. 8. 13. and if these men say (as the Devil to *Eve*) *you shall not die*, are they able think you to make it good? What can they overcome the God of heaven? O Sirs, away as you love your

your souls, from such mad and miserable company as this.

Chap. XXV.

Pleasing Accommodations, Buildings, Gardens, Horses, &c.

8. ANother sensual delight to be denied, is *Pleasing accommodations in Buildings, Rooms, Walks, Gardens, Grounds, Cattle, and such like.* Its lawful to be thus accommodated, and lawful to desire and use such accommodations, with such cautions as I gave before about recreations. 1. If you do not with *Ahab* desire to be accommodated by that which is another mans, coveting your neighbours possessions, or unlawfully procuring it. 2. If you be not at too much cost upon such things, expending that upon them that should be laid out on greater and better things. 3. But especially, if you desire such accommodations for right ends, sincerely referring all to Gods honour, and desiring them not principally to please your fancy and carnal mind, but for the enabling you the better and more cheerfully to serve God. Nothing but God may be loved for it self. When the Pleasing of the flesh and fancy is the utmost thing we look at in any of our desires, they are wicked and idolatrous. Our houses therefore must be fitted to Necessary uses, and not to inordinate delights. Our Gardens, Orchards, Walks, and such like, must be first suited to Necessity, and then to so much Delight as is useful to us for the promoting of our holiness; but not to any useless, tempting Delight.

But worldlings and sensual persons will not be tied to these Christian Rules. Alas, its the furthest matter from their minds, to make Heaven the End of all their earthly possessions and accommodations. They may hypocritically talk of God, and of serving him by their estates: but really it is the pleasing of a fleshly mind that is the thing which they intend. They have more delight in their houses, & gardens, and lands, and cattle, then in God and the hopes of life everlasting. They desire fair houses that they may be thought to be no mean persons in the world, and that they

they may please their humours that run after creatures for felicity and content. I would desire such men to consider these things.

1. All these are but the baits of Satan to delight you and entangle your desires, and find you work in seeking after them, while you neglect far greater matters. Can you have while to look so much after superfluities and delights in the world, when you have Necessaries yet to look after for your souls? Have you not greater things to mind then these, which these occasion you to neglect?

2. Do you really find that they conduce to your main end, even to make you more holy, or more serviceable to God? Nay do not your own Consciences tell you, that they hinder you & cross those ends? And yet will go against your experience?

3. If you are humble conscionable Christians, you feel cause enough already to lament, that your love to God and delight in him, is no more: And yet are you preparing snares for your souls, to steal away that little remnant of your affections, which you seemed to reserve for God?

4. If you have any spark of Grace in you, you know that the flesh and the world are your dangerous enemies; and you know that the way that the world doth undo men, is by ticing them to over-value it, and over-love it; and that those that love it most, are deepest in a state of condemnation; and the less men love it, the less they are hurt or endangered by it. And do you not know that you are liker to over-love a sumptuous house with gardens, orchards, and such accomodations, then a mean habitation? Why should you be such enemies to your own salvation, as to make temptations for your selves? Have you not temptations enough already? Do you deal with those you have so well, and overcome them so easily and so constantly, as that you have reason to desire more? If Christ your General *send* you upon a hotter service, you may go on with courage, and expect his help: But if you will so glory in your own strength, as to run into the hotter battle, and call for more and stronger enemies, its easie to conjecture how will you come off. If you are Christians, know your selves, you know that in the *meanest* state, you are too prone to over-love the world, and that under all Gods

Gods medicinal afflictions, you cannot be so weaned from it, as you ought! Are you not daily constrained to groan and complain to God under the burden of too much Love of the world, and too much delight in worldly things? If this be not your case, I see not how you can have any sincerity of saving grace. And if it *be* your case, will you be so foolish, and hypocritical, as to complain daily to God of your sin, and in the mean time to love and cherish it? to groan under your disease, and wilfully eat and drink that which you know doth increase it? What will you think of a man that will pray to God to save him from uncleanness, and yet will dwell nowhere but in a Brothel-house? What do you better, that must needs have the world in the loveliest garb, and must needs have house, and grounds, and all things in that plight, as are fittest to entice the heart; and then will complain to God, that you over-love the world, and love him too little. To your shame you may speak it, when you do it so wilfully, and cherish the sin which you thus complain of. If God call you into a state of fulness and temptations, watch the more narrowly, over your affections, and your practices: and use no more of the creatures for your *self* if you have ten thousand pound a year, then if you had but an hundred: but do not seek and long for temptations: Wish not for danger, unless you were better able to pass through it.

4. Remember when your fancies desire such things, not only that it is an enemy that desireth them, and to please your enemy is not safe for you: but also that its the way that most have perished by, to have the world before them in too pleasing and lovely a condition. Remember *Nebuchadnezzar's* case, *Dan.* 4. 30. that for glorying in his pompous buildings, was turned as a mad man among the Beasts. Remember the rich mans sad example, *Luke* 12.20.& 16. and think whether it be safe to imitate them? If men must perish for loving the creature more then God, methinks you should long most for that condition, in which the creature appeareth least lovely, or is least likely to steal your love from God, and in which you may love him and enjoy him most.

5. And bethink you how unsutable it is to your condition, to desire sumptuous buildings, & enticing accommodations to your

flesh. Have you not taken God for your portion, and Heaven for your home? and are you not strangers and pilgrims here? and is not God and everlasting glory sufficient for you? You profess all this, if you profess to be Christians: and if you be not, you should not profess that you are. And what! do you begin to repent of your choice? must you yet turn to the pomp and vanity of the world again? and will you quit your hopes of God and glory? Ah poor souls! what little need have you of such great matters on earth? you have but a little to do with them! and but a little while to stay with them! and will not a mean habitation, and shorter accomodations serve you for so short a time? Stay but a while, and your souls shall have house-room enough in heaven or hell, and a narrow grave of seven foot long will serve your bodies till the resurrection. And cannot you make shift with an ordinary habitation, and with small and common things till then? Naked you came into the world, and naked you must go out: make not then so great a stir in dressing, and undressing, and feathering a nest; that will be so soon pulled down.

6. And it is a dangerous sign that your time on earth is short, when you have most content in outward things. I have told you once in another Discourse (which I have since seen more of) that people that much set their hearts upon any earthly thing, do use to be snatcht away by death just when they have attained it, before they can have the comfort of possessing it. Just when their houses are built; just when their debts are paid, and their estates cleared and setled; just when they have such or such a thing which they earnestly desired, then they are gone; as the fool in *Luke* 12.20. *This night shall thy soul be required of thee: then whose shall those things be which thou hast provided?*

7. And you do but prepare for a double sorrow, when you must leave all these. Do you think that the more you love or delight in any thing below, you will not be the lother to leave it? Do not think only of the present content, but ask your hearts; shall I be willinger to part with a sumptuous house, and commodious gardens, walks and fields, then with a mean habitation, and less pleasing things? O how it tears the very heart of the worldling,

ling, when he sees that he must for ever leave all that which he set so much by, and which hath cost him so dear? If he set his heart but on a Horse, or any creature, the loss of it is a double suffering. Much more will he be wounded with the loss of all, that his mind was so much set upon.

Remember therefore Christians, that as these accommodations are mercies which you must faithfully use, when they are cast upon you; so they are snares not to be sought after; and matter for your *self-denial*, to neglect. As they are Provision for the flesh to fulfill its desires, you must not know them. You have *a building of God* to mind and look after; *a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens*, and it better beseemeth you, *earnestly to groan, to be* so *cloathed, that mortality may be swallowed up of life*, 2 Cor. 5. 1, 2, 4. Possess present things as not possessing them; and use them as not abusing them, for the form of them passeth away.

Chap. XXVI.

Apparel, as used for this Carnal End, &c.

9. ANother Object of sensuality to be denied, is, *Apparel, as desired for this Carnal end.* Though cloathing be a consequent of sin, yet now to man in this necessity, it is a mercy and a duty, so be it we use it with such cautions as in the foresaid cases is expressed. 1. That our end be the furnishing our frail bodies for the work of God, and the preserving them from that shame, and cold, and hurt which would unfit us for his service. 2. And that our apparel be fitted as near as we can to these ends; that is, to healthful warmth, and comelineſs: and that under the name of comlineſs we do not fit them to carnal ends, to set us out to the eyes of men, and to raise their esteem of our worth or comelineſs of person: but be satisfied if we avoid the shame of nakedness, & contemptible unhandsomness. 3. To which end we should see that we affect not to rise above those of our own rank, nor equal our selves in apparel with our superiors: but

go with the lower sort of our condition. 4. And that we imitate not the fashions of light and vain persons; but keep company in our attire with the most wise and sober, and grave persons about us. 5. And that we bestow no needless cost upon our attire, because we must be accountable for all that God entrusteth us with. 6. And that we change not causlesly. Thus must apparel be used: the cheapest that is warm and comely, according to the fashion of the gravest persons of our rank, and the lowest of them.

But, alas, this childish trifle the Devil hath made a bait of sensuality. The care that people have about it, the cost they bestow on superfluities, their desire to go with the highest of their rank, to say nothing of mutable and immodest fashions, do shew to what end it is that they use it. I desire these kind of people to think of these few things that I shall say to them.

1. This vanity of apparel, is the certain effect of the vanity of your mind: you openly proclaim your selves to be persons of a foolish, childish temper, and poor understanding: Among the most ungodly people, they that have but common wisdom, do look upon this vanity of inordinate apparel as quite below them. And therefore its commonly taken to be the special sin of women, and children, and light-headed, silly, empty men. Those that have no inward worth to commend them to the world, are silly souls indeed, if they think any wise folks will take a silken coat instead of it? It is wisdom, and holiness, and righteousness that are the ornaments of man; and that's his beauty which beautifieth his soul. And do you think that among wise men, fine clothes will go instead of wisdom, or vertue, or holiness? You may put as fine clothes upon a fool as upon a wise man: and will that think you make him pass for wise? When a gallant came into the Shop of *Apelles* that famous painter, to have his picture drawn, as long as he stood silent, the Apprentices carried themselves reverently to him, because he shone in gold and silver lace: but when he began to talk, they perceived that he was a fool, and they left their reverence, and all fell a laughing at him. When People see you in an extraordinary garb, you draw their observati-

observation towards you, and *one* asketh, *Who is yonder that is so fine?* and *another asks*, *Who is yonder?* and when they perceive that you are more witless and worthless then other folks they will but laugh at you, and despise you. Excess in apparel, is the very *sign* of folly, that is hang'd out to tell the world what you are, as a *Sign* at an Inn-door acquaints the passenger that there he may have entertainment. You draw folks to suspect that all is not well with you where there needs all this ado. Its sure a sorry house that needeth many props: and a diseased body that needeth so much medicining? and a deformed face that needeth painting: And what is gaudy attire to the body, but such as painting is to the face? If I see artificial teeth in your heads, I must think that you want the Natural ones that were better. If I perceive your breath to be still sweetned by art, I shall suspect that it would stink without it. And if I see people inordinately careful of their apparel, I must needs suspect that there is some special cause for it: all is not well where all this care and curiosity is necessary. And what is the deformity that you would hide by this? Is it that of your mind? Why you bewray it more? you tell all that see you, that you are empty, silly souls, as plainly as a Morrice-dancer, or a Stage-player doth tell folks what he is by his attire. Is it the deformities of your bodies that you would hide this way! I confess thats the best excuse that can be made for this excess: For apparel will do more to hide the deformities of the body then of the mind. But the *shape* of your clothes is fittest for this (so far it is fit to be attempted:) For the *bravery* of them will do little, but draw mens observation the more upon your infirmity. If you say that you *have* no such extraordinary necessity; then I must say that you do your selves wrong to tice people to suspect it.

2. And also you make an open ostentation of Pride, or lust, or both, to all that look upon you. In other cases you are careful to *hide* your sin, and take it for an hainous injury if you be but openly told of it and reproved: How comes it then to pass that you are here so forward your selves to make it known, that you must carry the *signs* of it open in the world! Is it not a dishonour to Rogues and Thieves, that have been burnt in

the hand or fore-head, or must ride about with a paper pin'd on their backs declaring their crimes to all that see them; So that every one may see, *yonder is a thief*, and *yonder is a perjured man?* And is it not much like it for you to carry the *badge* of pride or lust abroad with you in the open streets and meetings? why do you desire to be so fine, or neat, or excessive comely? is it not to draw the eyes and observations of men upon you? and to what End? Is it not to be thought either Rich, or beautiful, and of an handsom person? And to what end desire you these thoughts of men? Do you not know that this desire is Pride it self? You must needs be some body? and fain you would be observed and valued; and fain you would be noted to be of the best or highest rank, that you can expect to be reckoned of: And what is this but Pride? And I hope you know that Pride is the Devils sin, the first born of all iniquity; and that which the God of heaven abhors! so that it were more credit for you in the eyes of men of wisdom to proclaim your selves beggars, sots, or ideots, then to proclaim your pride. And too oft it shews a pang of *lust* as well as pride: especially in young persons: and few are so forward to this sin as they. This bravery and fineness is but the fruit of a procacious mind; its plainly a wooing, alluring act: It is not for nothing that they would fain be eyed, and be thought comly or fair in others eyes! somewhat they want: you may conjecture what! And even married people, if they love their credit, should take heed by such means of drawing suspicion upon themselves. Sirs, if you are guilty of *folly, pride and lust*, your best is way to seek of God an effectual cure, and to use such means as *tends* to cure it; and not such as tend to cherish it, and increase it; as certainly fineness in clothing doth: But if you will not cure it, for shame conceal it, and do not tell every one that sees you what is in your heart: what would you think of one that should go up and down the street, telling all that meet him [I am a theif, or I am a fornicator] would you not think that he were a compound of foolery and knavery? And how little do you come short of this that write upon your own backs, [*Folly, Pride and Lust*] or tell them by your

your apparel, [*Take notice of me: I am fooliſh, Proud and luſtful?*]

3. And if you be ſo ſilly as to think that bravery is a means of *honour*, you ſhould withall conſider that it is but a ſhameful *begging* of honour from thoſe that look upon you, when you ſhew them not any thing to purchaſe or deſerve it. Honour muſt be forced by deſert and worth, and not come by begging; for that is no honour thats given to the undeſerving. It is but the ſhadow of deſert, and will conſtantly follow it among the wiſe and good, but never go without it. Your bravery doth ſo openly ſhew your *deſire* of eſteem and honour, that it plainly tels all wiſe men that you are the leſs worthy of it. For the more a man deſireth eſteem, the leſs he deſerves it. And you tell the world by your attire that you deſire it: even as plainly and fooliſhly as if you ſhould ſay to folks in the ſtreets, [*I pray think well of me, and take me for an handſom comly perſon, and for one that is above the common ſort.*] Would you not laugh at one that ſhould make ſuch a requeſt to you? why what do you leſs, when by your attire you beg eſtimation from them? And for what I pray you, ſhould we eſteem you? Is it for your cloaths? why I can put a ſilver lace upon a mawkin, or a ſilken coat on a poſt, or on an Aſs. Is it for your comly bodies? why a wicked *Abſolon* was beautiful, and the baſeſt harlots have had as much of this as you: A comly body, or beautiful face doth oft *betray* the ſoul, but never *ſaveth* it from hell. And your bodies *are* never the comlier for your dreſs, whatever they may *ſeem*: Is it for your vertues that you would be eſteemed? Why *pride* is the greateſt enemy to vertue, and as great a deformity to the ſoul as the Pox is to the body: And he that will think you ever the *honeſter* for a new ſute, or a ſilver lace, doth as little know what honeſty is as your ſelves. For ſhame therefore give over begging for *eſteem*, at leaſt by ſuch a means as inviteth all wiſe men to deny your ſuit; But either let honour come without begging for, or be without it.

4. Conſider alſo that exceſs of Apparel doth quite contradict the End that proud perſons do intend it for. I confeſs it doth ſometime enſnare a fool, and ſo accompliſh the deſires of the luſtful: But it ſeldom attaineth the ends of the proud: For their deſire

desire is to be the *highlier* esteemed, and almost all men do think the *meanlier* of them. Wise men have more wit, then to think the Taylor can make a *wise* man or woman, or an *honest* man or woman, or an *handsom* man or woman: Good men pity them, and lament their folly and vice, and wish them wisdom and humility. In the eyes of a wise and gracious man, a poor self-denying, humble, patient, heavenly Christian, is worth a thousand of these painted posts and peacoks. And it so fals out that the ungodly themselves do frustrate the proud persons expectations. For as coveteous men do not like covetousness in another, because they would get most themselves, so Proud persons like not Pride in others, because they would not have any to vie with them, or overtop them, and be look't upon and preferr'd before them. None look with such scorn and envy at your bravery, as those that are as silly and sinful as your selves, who cannot endure that you should excell them in vanity; so that good and bad do ordinarily despise or pitty you for that which you think should procure your esteem.

5. Consider also, that Apparel is the fruit or consequent of sin, that laid man naked and open unto shame: and is it fit you should be proud of that which is ordained to hide your shame; and which should humble you by minding you of the sin that caused the necessity of it?

6. And you should bethink you better then most gallants do, what account you mean to make to God for the money that you lay out in excess of bravery, will it think you be a good and comfortable account, to say, [*Lord, I laid out so much to feed and manifest my Pride and Lust*] when such abundance of pious and charitable uses did call for all that you could spare? Many a Lord, and Knight, and Gallant bestoweth more in one suit of cloaths, or in one set of hangings, or in the superfluous dress of a Daughter, then would a keep a family of poor people for a twelve-moneth, or then would maintain a poor Scholar for higher service then ever they themselves will do; And many a poor boy or girl goeth without a Bible, or any good books, that they may lay out all they have on their backs.

7. Lastly,

7. Lastly, I beseech you do not forget what it is that you are so carefully a doing; and what those bodies are that you so adorn, and are so proud of, and set out to the sight of the world in such bravery. Do you not know your selves? Is it not a lump of warm and thick clay, that you would have men observe and honour? When the soul that you neglect is once gone from them, they will be set out then in another garb; That little space of earth that must receive them, must be defiled with their filthiness and corruption: and the dearest of your friends will have no more of your company, nor one smell or sight of you more if they can choose: There is not a carrion in the ditch that is loathsomer then that gallant painted corpse will be a little after death. And what are you in the mean time? Even bags of filth, and living graves, in which the carkasses of your fellow-creatures are daily buryed and corrupt. There is scarce a day with most of you, but some part of a dead carkas is buried in your bodies, in which as in a filthy grave, they lie and corrupt, and part of them turneth into your substance, and the rest is cast out into filthy excrements. And thus you walk like painted sepulchres: Your fine clothes are the adorned covers of filth, and flegm, and dung. If you did but see what is within the proudest gallant, you would say the inside did much differ from the outside. It may be an hundred worms are crawling in the bowels of that beautiful damsel or adorned fool that set out themselves to be admired for their bravery. If a little of the filth within do but turn to the scab or the small pox, you shall see what a piece it was that was wont to have all that curious trimming.

Away then with these vanities, and be not children all your daies; nay be not proud of that which your children themselves can spare! Be ashamed that ever you have been guilty of so much dotage, as to think that people should honour you for a borrowed bravery, which you put off at night, and on in the morning! O poor deluded dust and worms-meat! lay by your dottage, and know your selves: Look after that which may procure you deserved and perpetual esteem, and see that you make sure of the honour that is of God. Away with deceitful ornaments and gawds, and look after the

ward real worth. Grace is not set out and honoured by fine clothes, but clouded, wronged and dishonoured by excess. It is the inward glory that is the real glory. The Image of God must needs be the chiefest beauty of man: Let that shine forth in the holiness of your lives, and you will be honourable indeed. *Peter* telleth you of such a conversation of women as may *win their unbelieving husbands without the word*: And what is it? [*while they behold your chast conversation coupled with fear: whose adorning, let it not be that outward adorning, of plaiting the hair, and of wearing of gold, or of putting on of apparel: but the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit which is in the sight of God of great price. For after this manner in old time, the holy women that trusted in God adorned themselves, being in subjection to their husbands,* 1 Pet. 3. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5.

Chap XXVII.

Ease, Quietness, and Worldly Peace to be denied.

10. ANother part of Carnal self-interest to be denied, is, *Ease, and Quietness, and worldly Peace*, which the slothful and *self-seekers* preferr before the pleasing of God. Both the ease of the mind and of the body are here comprehended; and slothfulness in Gods neerest service, and also in the works of our callings to be reprehended.

The same fleshly Power that draweth one man to whoredom, and drunkenness, and covetousness, doth draw another to sloth and idleness. It is but several ways of Pleasing the same flesh, and obeying the same sensuality. And because that Idleness and Sloth is so great and common a sin, and yet made so light of by the most, I shall briefly tell you the mischiefs of it, and the Reasons that should make you hate it.

1. Slothfulness doth *contradict the very end of our creation and preservation, and the frame of our nature*; and so provoketh God to cut us off and and cast us as useless into the fire. Who dare

dare ſo wrong the wiſdom of God, as to ſay or think that he made us to do nothing! If a man make an houſe, it is to dwell in; if he make a watch, it is to tell him the hour of the day, and every thing is for its proper uſe: And is man made to be idle? what man, that is the nobleſt inferior creature, and an active creature, fitted for work, and the higheſt work! ſhall he be idle? Juſtly may God then hew him down as a dead and withered tree, and ſuffer him no more to comber his ground.

2. *Slothfulneſs is a ſin that loſeth the precious gifts of God.* Our faculties and our members are his gifts and talents, which he hath committed to us to uſe for his ſervice; ſo are our goods and all that we have: and ſhall we hide them in a napkin, or idly neglect to uſe them? O what abundance of excellent mercies lie uſeleſs and idle, becauſe you are idle that ſhould uſe them? Every hour that you loſe in idleneſs, what noble faculties, and large proviſions are all laid by? As much as in you lieth, you make the whole creation to *be*, and *Work* in vain. Why ſhould the Sun ſhine an hour or minute for you in vain? Why ſhould the Earth bear you an hour in vain? why ſhould the ſprings and rivers run for you an hour in vain? why ſhould the air refreſh you an hour in vain? why ſhould your pulſe beat one ſtroke in vain? or your lungs once breathe a breath in vain? ſhall all be at work for *you* to further *your* work, and will you think that idleneſs is no ſin?

3. Moreover, *Lazineſs and ſloth is a ſin that loſeth you much precious time.* All the time is loſt that you are idle in. Yea when you are at work, if you do it ſlothfully, you are loſing much of your time. A diligent perſon will go further, and do more in an hour then the lazy fleſh-pleaſer will do in two. When the ſlothful is praying, or reading, and working in his calling, he is but loſing half his time, which diligence would redeem. And is our time ſo ſhort and precious, and yet is Idleneſs an excuſable ſin? what, loiter ſo neer night! ſo neer eternity, when we have but a little time to work! O work while it is day, for the night is coming when none can work. Were it but for this, that ſloth doth ſteal ſo much of our time, I muſt think it no better then an hainous Thievery.

4. *And by this means we rob our ſelves.* We might be get-

ting some good all the time that we are idle; or doubly advantage our selves, if sloath did not keep us company in our work. *The sloathful is brother to him that is a great waster*, Prov. 18. 9. Sloathfulness is self-murdering; men die while they lye still and wish. Its a sin that famisheth soul and body, *Prov.* 21. 25. *The desire of the sloathful killeth him, because his hands refuse to labour.* Its the common cause of beggery and want: and what comfort can you have under such afflictions which you bring upon your selves? If you want food or rayment, if your wives and children are in want, how can you think that God should take care of you and afford you relief, when you bring this on your selves by pleasing your flesh which is his enemy? If a Souldier get hurt by trucking with the enemy, he may rather look that his General should hang him than relieve him. And how should good men be moved to compassionate you? If God do impoverish you, and you come to want by innocency or a righteous cause, they must needs be ready to relieve you: But if Sloath, or Pride, or Gluttony, or Drunkenness bring you to it, till you repent, I see not how they should relieve you, at least any further than to keep you alive. For if you are set to please your flesh by idleness, must I joyn with you to please it by such supplies as shall cherish you in your sin? No, one flesh-pleaser is enough for one man! If you will please it either by Idleness or by Luxury your selves, expect not that others should please it by your relief, and make provision for your sin. If I may not make provision for my own flesh to satisfie its lusts, neither must I do it for another.

But thats not the worst, *sloathfulness is the common cause of mens damnation*; when they see a temptation and danger before them, sloathfulness hindereth them from resisting it: When Heaven is offered them, sloathfulness makes them sit still and lose it. They must *Run*, and *Strive*, and *Fight*, and *Conquer*, and these are not works for a *sloathful* person; especially when they must be continued to the death. So that its manifest, that most men in the world are undone soul and body, by the sin of sloath.

3. *And by this you rob others as well as your selves*: You owe the

the world the fruit of your labours: You rob the *souls* of men to whom you should do good. You rob the *Church* that should be bettered by you: You rob the *Commonwealth* of which you are a member, and should have benefit by you. You *owe* your labours to Church and Commonwealth and the souls of men, and will you not pay so great a debt? You deserve no room in the Church or Commonwealth, but to be cut off as an unprofitable member, if you bring no advantage to them. They say the Bees will not suffer a drone in the Hive. Nay, if you be hired servants, you plainly rob your Masters if you are sloathful, as much as if you stole their money or goods: If you buy an hundred sheep of a man, and he let you have but fourscore, doth he not rob or cheat you? And if a man buy a years or a dayes labour of you, and you let him have but half a years labour, or half a dayes labour, because of your sloath, do you not defraud or rob him of the other half? So that the idle are thieves to themselves, to the Church and the souls of men, to the Commonwealth and those that they are related to; even to their wives and children, for whom they should provide due maintenance by their labour.

6. And *you are injurious to the honest poore, in that you disable your selves from relieving them*: when God commandeth you to *work with your hands*, not only for your selves, but *that you may have to give to them that need*, Eph. 4. 28. What if all men should do as you do, how would the poore be maintained and the Church and Commonwealth served?

7. Yea worst of all, *you are guilty of robbing God himself*. It is him that you owe your labours to, and the improvement of all the talents which he lendeth you: And idleness is unfaithfulness to the God of Heaven that setteth you on work: Even in working for men, you must do it ultimately for God, *Col.* 3. 22, 23. [*Not with eye-service as men pleasers, but in singleness of heart, fearing God: and whatsoever ye do, do it heartily as to the Lord, and not unto men; knowing that of the Lord you shall receive the reward of the inheritance, for ye serve the Lord: But he that doth wrong, shall receive for the wrong which he hath done.*] If it be an offence to wrong man, what is it to wrong God? and if you may not be sloathful in the work of a man,

what a crime is it to be ſlothful in the work of the God of Heaven? The greater your Maſter is, the more hainous it is to be lazy in his ſervice. Remember the curſe on them that do the work of the Lord deceitfully, *Jer.* 48. 10. All work that you have to do, is the work of the Lord.

8. And conſider, *That the Idle forfeit the protection and proviſion of God; even their daily bread.* For muſt he ſupport and feed you to do nothing? His own rule is, that *if any man will not work, neither ſhould he eat*, 2 Theſ. 3. 10. And if he may not eat, we may not relieve him.

9. And if idleneſs had not been an hainous ſin, the Apoſtle would never have commanded us *to avoid the company of ſuch*, as if they were unfit to converſe with Chriſtians. 2 *Theſ.* 3.

10. Conſider *what abundance of work we have to do, and of how great importance*! O what a deal have we to do for our poor ſouls, and for many about us, beſides all our bodily imployment in the world! Methinks, every man that knows why he is a man, and what it is, in an inch of time, to work for everlaſting, ſhould never find an hour for idleneſs in his life, but ſtill cry out, *How ſhort and ſwift is time, and how great and long is the work!* A man that had all the Town on fire about his ears, or a man that were fighting for his life, or a man that were in a leaking veſſel ready to ſink under him, might better be lazy, then a man that is at work for an endleſs life.

11. Moreover, *Idleneſs is a baſe kind of vice*: It is the imitation of a block or a ſtone that lieth ſtill, when that which hath life will be in action.

12. And it is uſually *a Continual ſin*, or at leaſt takes up a great part of the lives of many that are addicted to it. A drunkard will not *always* be drunk; and a lyar will not be *always* lying; But a ſlothful perſon will be *moſt commonly* ſlothful.

And, to conclude, lay all this together, and think what a reckoning a ſlothful perſon is like to have, that by his ſin is alway running behind hand, and will have the neglected time, and means, and mercies of almoſt all his life to anſwer for.

And now you ſee the greatneſs of this ſin, abhorr it, and awake from

from it. You have much to do, and ſouls to ſave; and the eaſe of your fleſh and fleſhly minds is one thing that muſt be denied, before it can be accompliſhed. The ſlothful is ſtill craving, *yet a little ſlumber*, and yet a little eaſe: and he is ſtill upon delays, even when he is convinced of his danger and his duty: when he knows that he muſt turn or die, yet he is delaying, and putting it off till another time: And ſo the vineyard and garden of the ſluggard, are grown over with nettles and weeds: And he hath ſcarce a duty to do but there is a thorny hedge or a Lyon in the way. Deny this eaſe, and be up and doing.

And there are three ſorts of perſons that have eſpecial need of this advice. The firſt is thoſe that by the flegmatick diſtemper of their bodies, are more prone to heavineſs and ſlothfulneſs then others. The more ſuch are diſpoſed to it, the more ſhould they watch againſt it and reſiſt it.

The ſecond ſort are Beggars, and other idle wandering perſons, that make a trade of Idleneſs, and worſe: ſuch alſo as Ballad-ſingers, Stage-players, Juglers, Cheaters, and moſt Ale-ſellers that ſpend their time in tipling and talking with their gueſts; and other idle perſons, that will ſpend whole hours together in twaltling and talking idly, and of other mens matters. All theſe live in a courſe of fleſh-pleaſing, and of hainous ſin: and muſt better learn to deny the fleſh, before they can be the true Diſciples of Chriſt. This is not the life that God called you into his vineyard for, no nor that he ſent you into the world for, to waſte your ſhort and precious daies in potting, and piping, and prating, and other ways of idleneſs; Nor ſhould ſuch be ſuffered in a Commonwealth.

The third ſort, are too many Lords, Knights, and Gentlemen, that think becauſe they have enough to maintain them, that it is lawful to live an idle life. Or if they do any thing that's profitable to the Commonwealth, it is rather as a recreation, then as a Calling: Now and then an hour in the midſt of their pleaſures and idleneſs, is the moſt. It is a miſerable life that this ſort of perſons live: even in the ſins of *Sodom* (which cry for the vengeance of *Sodom*) *Pride, Fulneſs of bread, and Idleneſs.* As if theſe perſons that have moſt wages ſhould do God the

the least work; and they that have most of his stock in their hands, should make the least use of it; or those that are obliged to God by the greatest mercies, should do least in manifesting their thankfulness or fidelity! what incongruities are these? Who should be so busie and laborious, as those that have the greatest account to make, and those that are to be exemplary to the rest? Truly Gentlemen, I must deal plainly with you, that Idleness and the expression of it among the most of you, in hunting, and hawking, and bowling, and complementing, and visitations, and vain discoursings, and excess of drinking, and tedious meals, is become the common shame of your order; and must be corrected before your honour or consciences can be recovered: And I am so far from any partiality in this censure of you, that I must tell you, if I knew one of my own profession that were guilty but of the tenth part of some of your Idleness, I would do my best to rid the Church of him, and have him cast out among the sensual. And you may do well sometime to ask your selves, whence it comes to pass that Negligent idle Ministers must be sequestred and turned out of all, and Idle Magistrates let alone? One reason is, because Gentlemen can better cheap compell a Minister to painfulness then themselves, and punish Ministers for negligence then themselves. And another reason is, because all faithful Ministers themselves in love to the Church are the seekers of this severity: but Magistrates are few of them so self-denying and forward to seek for such severity against the idle and negligent of their own order. But doth not your calling require diligence as well as ours? It is a brutish, ungrateful conceit of any man to think that he may live idly, because he is rich. The richest men in the world are bound to as diligent labour as the poorest, though not in the same kind. And yet I can perceive that most of the poor are even of the same mind; and when they labour hardest, they are idle in Gods account, because they would live idly if they could. It is no thanks to them that they labour; for it is *necessity* that doth *constrain* them. I can hear them say, that they would not work, at least but little, if they had but money enough. God will judge these as Idle persons, because he takes the will for the deed.

You

You must labour in obedience to God, and work as his servants, and that with cheerfulness and delight, and deny that *self* and flesh that would have ease, if ever you would have the heavenly reward.

Chap. XXVIII.

The Delight of thriving and prosperity, &c.

11. Another selfish Interest to be denied, is, *A Delight in prosperity, and seeing our selves thrive, and our designs succeed for worldly things.* The *possession* of these things doth not so much delight, as the *Hopes* and *successes* of our endeavours to attain them. The very thoughts of Prospering in our undertakings, and of being in a thriving course, and likely to reach some higher things which are in our eye and hope, is the greatest part of the content of Wordlings. Men think that the world can do more for them then it can, and is sweeter then it is; and therefore they are very eager in seeking it, and please themselves much with the thoughts of their supposed felicity: But when they have reacht the matter of their desires, they find it is not the thing they took it for. But in the mean time they feed themselves with fancies and expectations, and think that though this doth not content them, which they have attained, yet such or such a thing more would do it: and when they have that, yet somewhat *more* would do; and still though they come short of the felicity they expect, yet it pleaseth them that they think they are in the *way* to it, and see their endeavours seem to prosper. The poor man that hath a desire but to reach but to a competency, doth please himself much when he perceiveth that he is fair for it. Much more do the rich in the prospering of their designs, for the increase of their riches. And thus the *turning away of the simple doth slay them, and the prosperity of fools doth destroy them*, Prov. 1. 32. If their Prosperity be such an eye-sore even to the godly in temptation, when they judge according to the flesh,

no wonder if it be a great matter in their own eyes, *Psal.*73.3. If the best are in danger of puffing up with carnal delight and confidence in their attainments, and saying in their prosperity, [*we shall never be moved*] Psal.30.6. no wonder if it be much more so with others. Prosperity is as strong a trial to many as suffering for Christ; O how eager is the flesh upon this bait; and how close doth it cleave to what it doth attain!

See then that in this you *Deny your selves*: Not in refusing *Prosperity* when God bestows it on you; but in refusing the *sensual Delights* which it affordeth the flesh to satisfie its lust. Not in pulling down your houses, or casting away your estates, or hindering your increase; but 1. See that *you do not promise your selves too much in the creature*; feed not your carnal fancies with vain hopes. Think not too highly of a prosperous state. Judge not of it as it accommodateth the flesh, but as it either helps or hinders you for God and heaven: And then you'l perceive that it is an heavy charge and burden to the best, if not a dangerous temptation. O if you knew but how dear the most do pay for their prosperity, you would pity them, and have lower thoughts of prosperity.

2. *Seek not after prosperity too eagerly. Seek first the Kingdom of God and his Righteousness*, and then if other things be cast in or added to you, take them thankfully, but with *self-suspicion* and holy fear; but run not after them. *Labour not for the meat that perisheth, but for that which endureth to everlasting life*, *Joh.*6.27. and then take your daily bread as from your Fathers provision. Labour *about* the world, in obedience to God; but not *for* the world as your ultimate end.

3. When Prosperity is given you by God, then above all *take heed how you use it. Let carnal self and corrupt desires fare never the better for it, if you had all the country*, or were Princes in the earth. But as you have it *from* God, remember you have it *for* God, and use it *for* him. When the flesh would be pleased and lifted up, whether with delicious meats and drinks, or carnal pomp, applause or ostentation, or by sports, or idleness, or any other sensual delight, *deny* it these desires, as much as if you had no riches, and use nothing but for health and the service of God; and tell the flesh, [*It*

was

was not for thee, to the pleasing of thy desires, that God hath prospered me, but it was for his own more blessed ends; and therefore I will not serve or please thee by my prosperity, but him that gave it me] Do not think you have ever the more liberty to gratifie your appetites in eating or drinking, because you are rich, or to gratifie your flesh in inordinate sleep, or ease, or sports, or idleness: but *let the flesh have as little as if you had the meanest estate, in which necessity did not deny you that which might fit you for the work of God.*

Quest. But may not a Gentleman fare better then a poor man? and may he not spend more time in ease or recreations? or may he not wear more sumptuous apparel? *Answ.* 1. A Rich man that hath a greater family, must have a greater *quantity* of provision then a poor man that hath but few: and so must the poorest too, that hath the like number. And for the Quality; many poor are deprived of that which is most healthful through their necessity; and therefore here its lawful for the rich to go beyond them, and to use so much of the creature as is most healthful and useful to their duties. But for all this, the Richest man in *England* hath no more allowance to eat or drink one bit or cup for the meer pleasing of his carnal appetite without any higher end, then the poorest man that is: It is a sin to both. It was a Rich man that was tormented in Hell for taking up his good things in this life, in being clothed in purple and fine linnen, and faring deliciously or sumptuously every day, *Luk.* 16. 2. And the same answer I must give to the rest of the question, if a poor man want that ease, or sleep, or recreation, that would fit him for Gods service; a Rich may take it, but not a jot more. He may not lie one hour in bed, nor spend one hour in talk, or sports, or long dinners, beyond what is useful to his Christian ends, let him be never so rich. Rich men have as much work to do as the poor, and as much need to watch, pray, and fast, and study to prepare for death and judgement, which will not spare them because they are rich. If it be far hardest for a Rich man to enter into the Kingdom of God by Christs own testimony; then its clear, that Rich men have far greatest need to be painful to overcome their dangers, and

make sure work for their immortal state. 3. And as for Apparel, I grant, that rich men that are Magistrates or in any office or calling that requires it, may lawfully go in richer apparel then the poor: But this should not be one jot to please their carnal proud fancies, or gratifie inordinate fleshly desires, but meerly for health, and for such ornament as tendeth to the honour of their office: so that God and not *self* must be the end of all. Take warning therefore by the ruines of so many thousands as Prosperity hath undone, and by so many dreadful Passages of Scripture which shew the danger of it; and see that if you prosper in any worldly thing, you offer it all to God, and Deny your selves, and prosper not to the flesh.

Chap. XXIX.

Children and Relations how to be denied.

12. ANother *selfish* interest is in *friends and children and other neer and dear Relations*, and this is also to be *denied*.

Not that you should imitate those unnatural Hereticks that tell us that Fathers and Mothers, and Brethren, and Sisters, and Husbands and Wives, and Princes, and Subjects, are all Carnal Relations that must be disowned any further then justice binds us to a Retribution to parents or others that have been at pains or cost upon us: No, this is worse then heathenish impiety, and not only against the fifth Commandment, but abundance of the plainest passages through the Scripture: To be without natural affection, and disobedient to parents, is part of the Character of those impious professors of whom *Paul* propheſied, 2 *Tim.* 3. 2, 3. If Christian servants have Heathens to their Masters, they must not therefore cast off the yoak, but count them worthy of all honour, that the name of God and his doctrine be not blasphemed: And if they have believing Masters, they must not despise

deſpiſe them becauſe they are brethren, but the rather do them ſervice becauſe they are faithful. This is the doctrine of the Goſpel, which ſtabliſheth and not diſſolveth our Relations: and *if any teach otherwiſe, he is proud, knowing nothing, but doating about queſtions and ſtrifes of words*, 1 Tim. 6.1,2, 3,4. Believing wives muſt ſtay even with unbelieving huſbands, and win them to Chriſt by an eminent ſubjection, chaſtity, modeſty, and piety, 1 *Pet.*. 3. 1, 2, 3,4,6. 1 *Cor.*7. 13,14. And the like may be ſaid of other relations. God calls us not as Popiſh votaries conceive, to renounce and ſeparate from our natural or other near relations, on pretence of being devoted to him. The words of *Paul*, 2 *Cor.* 5. 16. are abuſed by them. Its true, we muſt *know no man after the fleſh*, no not Chriſt himſelf; that is, as eſteeming them principally for carnal excellencies (as perſonage, greatneſs, birth, *&c.*) or to carnal advantages and ends, or preferring the body and common relations before the inward ſpiritual worth and ſpiritual relations: And thus we muſt not know either parents, or children, or husbands, or wives after the fleſh; nor ſhould a Chriſtian know or do any thing after the fleſh as a Carnal man: but yet as we ſtill continue our Relation to Chriſt as his Diſciples, and Servants, and Members, and Redeemed ones, for all that we know him not after the fleſh; ſo muſt we continue our Relations to others, and be faithful in the duties of thoſe Relations, and this after the Spirit and for God.

So that by this you may ſee, that it is our Relations carnally conſidered that are the fleſhly intereſt which we muſt not know; that is, As they are lookt upon as any part of that *ſelf*, or of the *Intereſt* of that *ſelf* which would be its own End and God, and which is oppoſite to God, or not ſubordinate to him. To look upon your children more as *yours* then as *God's*, is a carnal ſelfiſh thought: To love them inordinately, and more becauſe they are your own, then becauſe they are Gods, and to love your own intereſt in your children more then Gods intereſt in them, is a ſelfiſh regarding them after the fleſh: Grace doth not deſtroy nature, nor natural Relations or affections; but it ſanctifieth them all to God and carrieth us above it, and deſtroyeth it as glorious intuition

deſtroyeth gracious knowing in part, that is, by perfecting it. Before Sanctification we know, eſteem, regard, and love our parents, children, husbands, wives, meerly as thus related to us, and in theſe Carnal reſpects, and riſe no higher: and if we had converſt with Chriſt himſelf, and eat and drank in his preſence, and loved him accordingly, it would have been but by a ſelfiſh, carnal knowledge, eſteem, and love: But now we are ſanctified, as God is exalted, and *ſelf denied* and annihilated, as oppoſed or ſeparated from God, ſo are all things that belong to ſelf: And therefore if we had loved parents or Chriſt himſelf but with ſuch a carnal ſelfiſh love before, yet now we love them with higher love, that carrieth ſelf and all to God. And thus even *ſelf* is ſo deſtroyed (as oppoſite to God and ſeparate from him) as thereby to be exalted as united and ſubſervient to him. And ſo is the love of friends, Relations, or Chriſts himſelf (if we had loved him as a natural Kinſman or brother, as ſome did that yet believed not in him) its deſtroyed, but by an exalting, perfecting deſtruction. Juſt ſo far as *ſelf* is dead, ſo far *Carnal knowledge* and *ſelf-intereſt* in friends is dead, and their dearneſs to us for that *intereſt*, and ſelf and they are all advanced and dedicated unto God. And thus it is that the Apoſtle would be underſtood, and thus it is that *ſelf* muſt be denied in your Relations; but becauſe much duty conſiſteth herein, I ſhall moreover tell you the ſeveral parts of it in a few Directions which ſhall moſtly extend to other Relations, but principally to parents, becauſe they are apteſt to exceed.

1. *See that it be God more then your ſelves that you love in your Children, and other Relations.* And to that End, ſee what of God is in them, as they are his creatures, as devoted to him, as any way gifted by him for his ſervice, and as ſanctified if they are ſuch. He that loveth any creature for it ſelf, and doth not principally love God in them, loveth them but carnally.

2. See therefore that you *value and love thoſe moſt that have moſt of God in them, and the beſt of his endowments.* Love a crooked, deformed child, that is Godly, better then the moſt comely, or beautiful, or witty, that is ungodly. When Parents have

have a humorous, unreasonable love to one child above the rest without desert, or to a worse before a better, this is but a carnal, selfish Love.

3 *Love none excessively*, but with a moderate love: such as shall allow God and holiness the preheminence; so that when you have the most love for your Relations, you may have more for God, at least in the Estimation, Resolution, Adhesion of your souls to him, if not in the passionate part of Love.

4. See that you *subject them to the Government of Christ*: Labour to win all other relations to him: and devote your children to him betimes that they may be his as soon as yours. Whiles they have no wils of their own to use, they are to choose with your wils: that is, you are to make choice for them. And therefore if you unfeignedly Dedicate them to God, you have small reason to doubt of his acceptance. This all parents do *virtually*, that are Godly: For he that is himself devoted to God by sanctification, doth with himself devote all that he hath, and virtually all that ever he shall have. And if he *understand* himself, he will do it *actually*. And hence it is that the Seed of Believers (yea of one Believer) are said to be Holy: Not only or cheifly, because they are yours, born of your bodies; nor meerly from a promise of God, that hath no presupposed reason from the subject: But because they are the children of one that hath devoted himself, and all that he hath to God; and if he understand himself, doth actually offer, devote, and dedicate his child to God in the solemn Baptism, Ordinance and Covenant. And God will sure accept all that upon his own invitation is consecrated and offered to him.

5. See that you *submit them heartily to the dispose of God*. So that whatever he do with them, for sickness or health, for poverty or riches, for honour or dishonour, for life or death, you can patiently bear it, and say as *Eli*, *It is the Lord, let him do as seemeth him good*, 1 Sam. 3. 18. Murmur not if God afflict and take them away, even at once, as he did the sons of *Job*, or if he should afflict you in them as he did *David* in *Amnon* and *Absalom*. Remember that as the Resignation of Life it

self

self is the point by which Christ under the Gospel doth try mens faith, so it was the resignation of an only son, which was next to life, by which he would try *Abraham* the Father of the faithful, before the incarnation of Christ. If therefore you will be children of *Abraham*, you must walk in the steps of faithful *Abraham*, and remember that your children are not your own; and be content that God do with his own as he pleases.

6. *Make God their portion, as much as in you lieth, and seek more for a spiritual then temporal felicity for them*, and acquaint them with their Creatour in the dales of their youth: as believing that those of them that are the Holiest are the Happiest.

7. *Devote your children to such callings and imployments in which they are likeliest to be most serviceable to God*: Consider their dispositions and parts; and then never ask what kind of life is the most honourable or gainful for them, but in what way and course of life they may most serve God, and be most useful to his Church: And to that let them be devoted.

8. *Favour them not in sin*: and suffer them not to dishonour God that they are devoted to: Remember *Eli's* example. Gentle reproofs instead of necessary severe correction, is called by God, *A despising him, and preferring his sons before him*: 1 Sam. 2. 29, 30. even because his *sons made themselves vile, and he restrained them not*, 1 Sam. 3. 13. Take heed as you love your selves or them, of taking their parts against God, or against correction, and excusing the sins by which they do dishonour him.

9. *Give them not for their carnal advancement in the world that part of your estate which is due to God.* You owe it all to him: and in the disposing of it, he hath limited you to begin at home, and provide so for your children that they may have their daily bread, and so much more as they are in likelyhood the fittest stewards to improve for God. But if you see the publike state of the Church or Commonweal to stand in need of your assistance, and you shall then give almost all to your children to make them rich and great in the world, and put off the works of greater moment with some poor inconsiderable

rable alms or Legacy, this is to preferr *self* before the Lord, even as it is imagined to survive in your progeny, even when natural *self* can no longer enjoy it. Its a wonder, how so many men seeming holy and devoted to God, can quiet their consciences in such a palpable sin as this. If one of them have two hundred, or three hundred pound a year, its a wonder if he leave an hundred a year of it to any pious or charitable use; but if he leave fourty or fiftypound to the poor, or build some small Alms-house, he thinks he hath done well; all the rest must go to leave his son in equal dignity and riches in the world as himself. But of this I spoke before.

10. Lastly, be sure that you be very *suspicious of self when the case of your children or any dear Relation is before you.* For *self* is neer you, and will stick close, and will not easily be thrust out of your Counsels, nor shaken off: And therefore in your own case, and your *Childrens* case, or the case of your neer friends, you will have much ado to overcome the cunning and strong temptations to Partiality, if you were the holiest Saint on earth: (though overcome them you will in the main if you have true grace): But if you are dead professors, its twenty to one but they will overcome you; and you will shew the world that you are selfish hypocrites, and more for your children and friends then God.

Let me here give a few instances in this warning. 1. How oft have we seen it here and elsewhere, that people that make some shew of Religion, and are forward to have vice punished, and discipline exercised, yet when it fals on any *children*, or *neer relations* of their *own*, they are as much *against* it as they are for it on others; yea rise up with passion and bitter reproaches of Officers, Ministers or others that are the causes of it. As one Hypocrite is tried when he denieth to suffer for Christ himself, so others shew themselves Hypocrites sooner, by preferring their children, yea their sinful children, yea the present ease, or profit, or credit of their children, before their duty and the honour of God: And they will rather have God provoked, sin unpunished, and their childrens own salvation hazarded, then they will have them justly and regularly chastised: yea some of them

rise up as malignant enemies against them that do it.

2. Again, When God hath convinced you of duty, if a carnal friend, a husband or a parent do but contradict it, and perswade you from a known duty or a holy life, how commonly do men obey, because forsooth they are their friends that do perswade them?

3. Moreover, When the case falls out that a man cannot follow God and his duty, and be true to his soul, but he is like to lose his friends; how commonly is God denied, that friends may not be denyed, and conscience wounded, and duty bawkt, that the favour of friends may not be lost. *O* saith one, *they are the friends that I live by, my livelyhood is in their hands, I am undone if they cast me off!* Well! take them, and make thy best of them and keep them as long as thou canst; if thou canst live better without God then them, or canst spare Gods favour better then theirs, and they are better friends to thee then Christ is, and would be, take thy course, and judge at last whether the friend that thou didst chuse, or that thou didst neglect and abuse, was the better, & would have stood thee in more stead in thy deepest extremities. Christ hath resolved you once for all, that he that loveth Father, or Mother more then him, is not worthy of him, and cannot be his Disciple: Nay if he hate not Father, Mother, and all; that is, If he wil not cast them all away, and forsake them as men do hated things, rather then forsake Christ and the glory which he hath promised, *Luke* 14. 26, 33. And therefore seeing Christ hath thought meet to instance in the forsaking of carnal friends for his sake, as a duty of all that will be his Disciples, you may see that this is a very considerable part of your self-denyal. And doubtless it is a point that Christians are usually put to the tryal in, or else Christ would not have instanced in it. Few turn to Christ, but their carnal friends will turn from them. No greater enemies to a man in the matters of his salvation (except carnal self) then carnal friends: and therefore either God or they must be denied. For when God is for holiness and they against it; when they are for sinful pleasures and gain, and God against it, both cannot be pleased; and therefore one of them must be denied, God or they.

CHAP.

Chap. XXX.

Revengeful passions to be denied.

13. ANother part of *self-denial* consisteth in the denying of *Revengeful Passions* that provoke us against those that have done us wrong, or that we judge to be our enemies. It is the common saying of such persons as are disposed to this sin, that *Revenge is sweet*: it easeth the minds of malitious persons to have their will upon their adversaries, and to see them at their feet. Nothing of all his honours and prosperity could satisfie *Haman* till he was revenged of *Mordecai*. As a burning festering boile or apostеme is eased by opening and vent, so is a boiling passionate mind, when by railing speeches, or revengful actions it venteth it self against them that they hate. But in this also *self* must be denied by all that will be Christs Disciples: for he forgiveth none but those that can heartily forgive another: And that we may know that this is a part of *self-denial*, of great necessity, he hath put it into our prayers, and will not have us so much as ask for forgiveness our selves, if we cannot forgive; that we may know, that seeing it is not to be asked for on lower terms, it is not to be hoped for. The forgiving grace of God in Christ doth so melt and overcome the hearts of all true Christians, that it disposeth them in their measure to imitate him in forgiving: And they cannot find in their heart to take another by the throat for an hundred pence, when their Lord hath forgiven them ten thousand talents, *Mat.* 18.24.28. The grace that is most gloriously manifested in the Gospel, must needs make the deepest impression on the soul, and consequently conform the soul into its image: and doubtless this is love, and compassion, and *forgiving-mercy*: and therefore he that cannot *love his enemy, bless them that curse him, and pray for them that hate and persecute him*, and return good for evil, can be no child of God, *Mat.*5.44,45,46. It is an inhumane oblivion of our own condition, for a man to seek revenge of another for a trifle, (for it can be no greater as it is against

ſuch ſimple worms as we) when ſo many and hainous ſins have been forgiven us. Doth God remit to us the everlaſting torments, and ſhall we inflict on another the venom of our private ſpleen? I know the furious bedlams and malicious wretches do take all this but for unſatisfactory talk, and it is not words that will ſerve their turns to repair their honour, and eaſe their Deviliſh rancorous minds. Fleſh and blood ſay they, cannot endure it. *Anſw.* And therefore *fleſh and blood cannot inherit the Kingdom of God, nor corruption inherit incorruption*, 1 Cor. 15. 50. Grace can do more then fleſh and blood; and if you cannot forgive, you cannot be forgiven. If it be ſo hard to you to *forbear*, yea to *love* an enemy, it ſhall be as hard for you to be ſaved, and eſcape the portion of the enemies of God; and if the word of Gods command be but wind with you, the word of his promiſe ſhall be as uneffectual to your ſalvation, as the word of his precept and perſwaſion was uneffectual to your converſion and obedience. As God is Love, ſo his ſanctified ones are turned into Love. Love is their new nature: and Love is not of a Revengful diſpoſition. Love is the Divine Nature in us; and malice provoking to Revenge is the Deviliſh nature. And a believer is more afraid of the anger of God, then to take his ſword of Revenge out of his hand. He hath learnt, 1 *Pet.* 2. 21, 23. 1 *Theſ.* 4. 6. *Rom.* 12. 19. [*Avenge not your ſelves, but give place to wrath: vengeance is mine, and I will repay, ſaith the Lord. Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good.*

Chap. XXXI.

New, vain Hiſtories, and other Mens Matters, &c.

14. ANother piece of Carnal pleaſure to be denied, is, the *Delight men have in reading unprofitable Hiſtories, and hearing news that do not concern us, and medling with other mens matters where we have no Call.*

With ſome fancies this is a notable part of carnal delight: Many

Many school-boyes, and young effeminate wits are as much poysoned and carried away with reading Romances, feigned histories and tale-books, and play-books, as by almost any piece of sensuality. O the precious hours that have been lost upon this trash and trumpery; but of this I spoke before: Chap. 22. p. 126. that which now I speak, is, even true History and Reports, as matter of meer *News*, to please a busie ranging mind. History is a very profitable study if it be used for right ends, and be rightly chosen. Its a very great help to understand the Scriptures, and to know the former and present state of the Church; and see the wonderful works of providence, that otherwise would be as lost to us. It is not fit that the wondrous works of God should die with those that have seen them, and not be transmitted to posterity. God should have the honour of his glorious works, from generation to generation: and how should that be if all be forgotten? He that knoweth nothing of any age but that which he lives in, is as foolish as he that knows nothing of any Country or Town but that which he lives in. Some History is essential to our faith; and much more is integral to it; and yet much more is very serviceable to it. He that hath not some competent acquaintance with Church-history, will be at great disadvantages in the holding and defending his faith it self against an Infidel, or the purity of Religion against a Papist. And he that knoweth not the present state of the world, and of the Church through the world, doth scarce know how to order his affections, or compose his prayers even in those greatest petitions, about the honour and Kingdom and will of God. They cannot grieve with the Church in grief, nor mourn with it when it mourns: so that it is a great duty of a Christian to labour to understand by History the former and present state of the Church: And it is a great mark of a gracious soul that longs to hear of the prosperity of the Saints, and free progress of the Gospel; and a mark of a graceless person that careth not for these things.

But when history is not used to acquaint us with the matters of God, or to furnish us with useful knowledge, but to please a raging carnal mind, then it is but sinful sensuality or

vanity. Many perſons have no ſuch delight to read the uſeful hiſtory of Church-affairs, as they have to read the curiouſly penned, though leſs uſeful hiſtory of other matters. Though I know that the Hiſtory of the whole world is very ſerviceable to the knowledge of Divine things: yet they that uſe it to holy ends, will make choice accordingly, and be no more in it then may ſuit with thoſe ends. It is the moſt humane, with the moſt light, ridiculous paſſages that are moſt pleaſing to vain unſanctified wits; but the godly delight in it ſo far as it ſhews them ſomething of God, and leadeth them to him. In the very reading of Scripture, a carnal reader may be much pleaſed with the Hiſtory, that hath no ſavour in the doctrine, but is weary to read it: and yet I muſt add this caution by the way; If we find a carnal kind of delight in Scripture-hiſtory or any other that is profitable, we muſt not therefore caſt off the hiſtory, but ſeek after the cure of our diſeaſe, that we may ſpiritually take pleaſure in all for God, and he may be the beginning, and end, and the life, and the All of our ſtudies and delights: And though our carnal delight in News and Hiſtory be a ſin in us; yet God doth ſometime make it an occaſion of Good, by leading us to that holy truth, which after may be the means of our ſanctification, though at firſt we received it but as Novelty.

And ſo the carnal pleaſure that many have in hearing News, and ſitting with folks that will talk of other mens matters, or things that concern them not, is nothing but a ſinful pleaſing of the fancy, and loſs of time, and neglect of greater matters which call for all our time and care. It was the vice of the *Athenians*, *Act* 17.21. [*for all the* Athenians *and ſtrangers that were there, ſpent their time in nothing elſe but either to tell or to hear ſome new thing*] yea novelty of doctrine and religion, and teachers, is a ſnare and bait to carnal fancies, which many are taken by, that are forſaken of God, having firſt forſaken him, and proved falſe to the truth received.

CHAP.

Chap. XXXII.

Unneceſſary Knowledge, and Delight therein.

15. ANother part of Carnal Pleaſure which ſelf muſt be denied in, is, *A deſire after unneceſſary Knowledge, and Delight therein.* This is the common ſin of man, but not of all alike. Even they that can live without the Knowledge of the ſaving Principles of Religion, do yet itch to know unprofitable things: and many a fooliſh queſtion they will be asking about matters unrevealed, or that concern them not, when they overlook that which their ſalvation lyeth on: but the learneder ſort, and eſpecially more prying wits, and thoſe that are bred up among diſputes, are the proneſt to this ſin: and though it be an odious vice, yet it ſo befooleth many, that they reckon it confidently among their vertues.

God cannot be known too much, nor can any man be too much in love with the true knowledge of God in Jeſus Chriſt: without this knowledge the mind is not good, nor can the heart be ſanctified, or the man be ſaved: Nor can any man know too much of the will and word of God; nor yet of his works in which he revealeth himſelf to the world. But the Carnal knowledge which is to be denied, is of another nature then the ſanctified knowledge of believers. I ſhall ſhew you the difference in certain particular reſpects.

1. This deſire to know, which is in the unſanctified, is, partly from meer nature, and partly from a diſtempered fantaſie, which is like a corrupt enraged appetite, that chooſeth that which is unwholſom, and yet is over-greedy after it. But the deſire after knowledge in the ſanctified, is kindled by the love of God, and the love of thoſe holy and heavenly things which they are inquiring after. It is not the *Love of God* that ſets ungodly men upon their ſtudies, but a common and carnal deſire to *know*; and this appears in the end, which is next.

2. This carnal knowledge is but to feed and furniſh and pleaſe a carnal fancy; becauſe it is ſome adding to our underſtandings, and becauſe it is naturally pleaſant to know, and becauſe

because it brings in some novelty and variety, and because it makes us seem wiser then other men, and furnisheth us with matter of discourse and ostentation, and rids the mind of some troublesom doubts; therefore even the worst have a mind to know. But this is the knowledge that must be Denied: that which must be valued and sought after, is, To know God, that we may love, and reverence, and trust, and admire, and honour him, and enjoy him: To know Christ, that we may have more Communion with him: To know the word and works of God, that in them we may know his nature and his will: and knowing his will, may serve him and please him: These must be the ends of Christian knowledge. There is nothing in the world that God hath revealed, but in its place we may be willing to know, so that we stick not in the creature, or sense of the words, or common verities, but use every thing as a book or looking glass: we love not a *book* so much for the letters as for the matter which they contain: and we love not a *Glass* for it self so much as for its use to shew us the face which we would see in it: so if we go to the creatures but as a book in which we may read the mind of God, and see his nature, and as a glass in which his glory doth shine forth, our study and knowledge will be sanctified and divine. And thus as *Paul* would *know nothing but Christ Crucified*, so every Christian should be able to say, that he would know nothing but God in Christ: for though we know a thousand matters, and that of the lowest nature in themselves, yet as long as we study them not for themselves but for God, it is not them that we know so much, as God in them; and so all is but the knowing of God: even as in our duty, though the works may be many and mean that we are employed in, yet all is but the serving of God, as long as we do them all for him: this is the main difference between an unsanctified scholar and a servant of God in all their studies: One of them is but recreating his curious fancy or inquisitive mind, and seeking matter of honour and applause, or some way or other studying for *himself*: but the other is searching after the nature and will of his Creator, and learning how to do his work in that manner as may please and honour him most.

moſt. So that when they are reading the ſame books, and ſtudying the ſame ſubjects, they are upon quite different works, as having contrary ends in all their ſtudies: the one is content with bare ſpeculation and aery knowledge which puffeth up; and the other ſtudieth and knoweth practically to feed the holy fire of love in his heart, and to guide, and quicken, and ſtrengthen him for obedience.

3. Moreover there is a difference commonly in the *ſubject* which they moſt deſire to know: for though there is no truth but a wicked man may know, which a true Chriſtian knoweth, and alſo but few truths but what he may for ſelfiſh ends be deſirous to know; yet ordinarily a carnal heart is much more forward to ſtudy common ſciences then Divinity; and in Divinity to ſtudy leaſt the practical part, and to be moſt in points that exerciſe the brain, and lie further from the heart: but the ſanctified man delighteth moſt in knowing the myſterie of Redemption, the riches of grace, the glory which he hopeth for, the nature and will of God, the way of duty, the temptations that are before him, and his danger by them, and the way to eſcape, with ſuch other uſeful truths which he muſt live upon. One feeds but upon the air and chaff of words and notions, or common truths; and the other is taken up with the moſt ſpiritual, heavenly and neceſſary matters: yea it is not ſo much the truth as the matter or thing revealed by it which the Chriſtian looks after: it is not only to underſtand the meaning of the Scripture; but to find, and love, and enjoy that God, that Chriſt, that Spirit, that Life which is revealed in thoſe words of Scripture; but the hypocrite ſticks moſt in a Grammatical ſuperficial kind of knowledge.

4. Moreover, Carnal love of knowledge doth draw the ſoul from God to the creature: it is ſelf and the creature that is ſought after in it: and therefore the more ſuch knowledge, the further from God. This was *Adams* temptation and ſin, to deſire to know good and evil for himſelf, ſo that he might have leſs need to live in an implicite belief of God, and dependance on him, but might be acquainted what was good and evil for himſelf, that he might truſt himſelf, and live to himſelf: But ſpiritual knowledge carrieth us from ſelf.

5. Carnal knowledge would break Gods bounds, and would needs know that which God hath not revealed, and pry into the ſecrets of heaven: with a preſumptuous immodeſty they would reach to that which is above man, while they are wilfully or negligently ignorant of that which ſhould heal them of their brutiſhneſs. They are ſo ſhallow that they comprehend not any one of the ſmalleſt creatures of God, and yet they have arrogant proud conceits that muſt be ſatisfied about the higheſt myſteries: and though through their own unpreparedneſs and ignorance they know not that which elſe they might know, and cannot ſee the ſtrength of a reaſon, which the wiſe can ſee; yet will they ſooner quarrel with the light then with their eyes, and ſuſpect the reaſons and words of God rather then their purblind minds. But ſpiritual knowledge is modeſt, and humble, and obedient; and preſumeth not to climb any higher then the ladder, leſt he loſe more by ſuch a ſtep too high, then he got by all his labour hitherto; and find himſelf all in pieces at the bottom while he would needs climbe above the top. He finds work enough in what God hath commanded him to ſtudy in his word; and therefore hath no leiſure to look after things that God hath hid from him: It is for the uſe of knowledge that he would know; and therefore he hath no great mind of that which is uſeleſs; and he knows that God is the beſt Judge of that; and therefore he takes that to be beſt for him which is preſcribed him.

6. Carnal Students are apt to learn in the wayes which their intereſts and fancies lead them to: but holy Students learn of God in his preſcribed way; that is, 1. In his Church which is his School. 2. And in and by his holy Scripture, which is the book he ſets us to learn. And 3. By his Miniſters whom he commandeth to teach us. 4. And in obedience to his ſpirit that muſt make all effectual. And 5. In fervent prayer to God for that ſpirit and a bleſſing. This is Gods way in which he will bring men to ſaving knowledge.

7. Alſo Carnal Students obſerve not (commonly) Gods order in their learning: but they begin at that which ſuteth beſt with their carnal intereſt or diſpoſition, as being leaſt againſt

against it, and they catch here and there a little, and make what their list of it, and force it to their carnal sense, and to speak for that which their minds are most affected to. But the sanctified student, begins at the botom, and first seeks to know the Essentials of Religion, and Points that life lieth most upon: And so he proceeds in order, and takes the lesson which God and his Teachers set him, and take up truths as they lie in order of necessity and use.

8. And in the manner also the difference is great. The Carnal student searcheth presumptuously, self-conceitedly, and unreverently, and speaks of holy things accordingly, and censureth them, when he should censure himself and actions by them, and bendeth the words of God to his own carnal interest and will. But the Spiritual student searcheth meekly with fear and reverence, with self-suspicion and consciousness of his exceeding darkness, and with a willingness and resolution to submit to the light, for conviction and for the guidance of his conversation.

And now you see what carnal studies are, remember that to avoid them is part of your *self-denial*. Restrain your ranging fantasies and understanding, as you would do a ranging appetite. If you have a mind that would fain reach higher then God hath given you light in Scripture, or a mind that must needs be satisfied of the reasons of all Gods ways, and murmureth if any of its doubts be unresolved, remember that this is *self* that must be denied; and if any be wise in his own eyes, he must become a fool that he may be wise, 1 *Cor.* 3. 18. and as little children must you come to the School of Christ, if you will indeed be his Disciples. And remember that this Intellectual voluptuousness, licentiousness, and presumption of Carnal minds, is a higher, and in some respects, greater and more dangerous vice, then brutish sensuality. And you may cheat and undo your souls in a civil course of carnal selfish studies, as well as in a course of more gross and sensual voluptuousness.

Chap. XXXIII.

Factious Desire of the success of our own Opinions and Parties, as such, &c.

16. ANother selfish Interest to be Denyed, is, *The factious desire of the success of any odd opinions which we have espoused, and of the increase and prosperity of any dividing party in the Church which we have addicted our selves unto.*

It exceedingly deligheth a Carnal mind that his Judgement should be admired, and he should be taken as the light of the Countrey round about him, and therefore when he hath hatcht any opinions of his own, or espoused any whereby his singularity may be manifested, or by which his selfish interest may be promoted, he is as careful to promote these opinions, and the party that holdeth with him, as a Covetous man is to promote his gain. There is indeed as much of *self* in many mens Heresies and Church-divisions, as any Sensualist hath in his way. And hence it is that a zeal for *selfish* opinions is easily got and easily maintained; when zeal for the saving truths of God is hardly kindled, and hardly kept alive. Yea multitudes in the world do make the very truth to be the matter of their carnal interest; while they some way get a seeming peculiar interest in it, and promote it but as an opinion of their own, or of their party, and use it for selfish carnal ends. And hence it is that many that are called Orthodox, can easily get and keep a burning zeal for their Orthodox opinions, when Practical Christians do find it a very hard matter to be zealous for the same truths in a Practical way. Many ungodly men will be hot in Disputing for the truth, and crying down all that are against it, and perhaps so far exceed their bounds, that the godly dare not follow them! And the reason is clear. Whether it be Truth or Error that a man holds, if he hold it but as a conceit of his *Own*, or as the opinion of his party, or to be noted in the world, as one that hath found out more truth then others, or any way make it but the matter of his *selfish* inteteſt, nature and corruption will furnish him with a zeal for

for it: Its easie to go, where sin and Satan drives; and to be zealous where zeal hath so small resistance: and to swim down the stream of corrupted nature. But it is not so easie to be zealous in the practical saving entertainment of the truth, and exercising that faith and love to God and holy obedience which truth is sent to work in us. A schismatical or Opinionative use of truth it self, is but an using it for *self* against the God of truth: and it is no more wonder to see men zealous in this, then to see men forward and hot in any evil: We cannot tell how to quench or restrain this selfish carnal kind of zeal. But when men should use the truth for God, and their salvation against Satan, and sin, and *self*, then its hard to make them zealous: They are like green wood or wet fuel on the fire, that will not burn without much blowing, and soon goeth out when it seemed to be kindled, if once you leave it to it self: *Paul* spoke not non-sense when he said [*For ye are yet Carnal: for Whereas there is among you envying, and strife, and divisions, are ye not carnal, and walk as men? For while one saith, I am of* Paul, *and another, I am of* Apollo, *are ye not Carnal?* 1 Cor. 3. 3, 4, 5. How secretly soever it may lurk, there is doubtless much of *self* and *flesh* in Heresies and unjust Divisions. I know that most of them little perceive it. *James* and *John* in their zeal, which would have called for fire from heaven, did not know what spirit they were of. But God would not have spoke it, if it were not true. *Rom.* 16. 17. [*Now I beseech you brethren, mark them which cause Divisions, and offences, contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned, and avoid them: For they that are such, serve not our Lord Jesus Christ but their own belly, and by good words and fair speeches deceive the hearts of the simple*] Though they little believe that there is any such wickedness in them as this, yet the Spirit of God, that is the searcher of hearts is acquainted with it: and assureth us that both at the *botom*, and the *End*, Church-dividing courses have a carnal selfish nature: It is some secret interest of *self*, (though scarce discerned) that kindleth the zeal, and carrieth on the work: It is not God that is served by the divisions of his Church. Many Sects now among us, do put a face of *Truth* and *Zeal* upon their cause: But *self* is the more

dangerously powerful with them, by how much the less suspected or observed. The Papists under the pretence of the Churches Union, are the great dividers of the Christian world, unchurching the far greatest part of the Church, and separating from all that be not Subjects of the Pope of *Rome*: And do you think it is not *self* and *flesh* that is the Principle and Life, and End of this their Schism? were it not for the upholding of this usurped power, and worldly immunities, and greatness of the Clergy, it is morally impossible that so many men of reason and learning could concurr in such a schism, and in so many gross conceits as go along with it. It is not the Pope that they are Principally united in: For the far greatest part of them, it is too evident that it is *selfish* and *fleshly* interest that is their Center, to which the Pope is but a means. Hence it is that many of their Jesuites and Fryars are carried abroad the world, with such a fire of zeal, to promote their cause, that they will compass sea and land for it, and day and night are busie at the work, to plot, and contrive, and insinuate, and deceive, and think no cost or pains too great. For a *selfish* sinful zeal and diligence hath so many friends, and so little hindrance, that its easily maintaned: but so is not the healing, peaceable, practical, and holy zeal of true believers.

Well! Consider what I say to you from the Word of the Lord: There is a *selfish dividing Zeal in Religion*, which must be denied as well as whoredom or drunkenness. If you ask me how its known: Briefly now I shall only tell you this much of it: 1. that it is usually for either an Error or a particular Truth, against the interest and advantage of the body of unquestionable Christian verities. They can let Religion suffer by it, so their opinion do but thrive. 2. It is usually for an Opinion by reason of some special endeerment or interest of their own in it. 3. They cry up that opinion with a zeal and diligence much exceeding that which they bestow upon other opinions of equal weight; and lay a greater stress upon it, then any shew of reason will allow them. 4. They usually are zealous for a party and division, against the Unity of the Catholike Church. 5. Their Zeal is most commonly turned against the faithful

faithful Paſtors of the Church : For its hard to keep in with ſchiſm, and with faithful Paſtors too : And if the Miniſters will not own their ſin and error, they will diſown the Miniſters. The Anabaptiſts and other Sects of late, would never have been ſo much againſt Chriſts Miniſters, if the Miniſters had not been againſt their way. 6. Their Courſe doth in the concluſion, bring down Religion, and hinder the thriving of the Goſpel and of Godlineſs. Mark, what is the iſſue of moſt of thoſe ways, that theſe men are ſo hot for? Doth it go better or worſe with the Church and cauſe of Chriſt in general, where they are, then it did before? Is Religion in more ſtrength, and beauty, and life, and honour ? or doth real holineſs more abound? If ſo, be not too haſty to cenſure their Zeal. But uſually all theſe dividing ways, are the diſeaſes of the Church : which cauſe its languiſhing, decay, and diſſolution. 7. Laſtly, This ſelfiſh zeal is commonly cenſorious, and uncharitable, and diminiſheth Chriſtian Love, and ſets thoſe a reproaching and deſpiſing each other, that ſhould have lived in the Union and Communion of Saints. Where you find theſe properties of your zeal and deſire, for the promoting of your Opinions or parties in Religion, you have great reaſon to make it preſently your buſineſs to find out that inſinuating *ſelf*, which maketh your Religion Carnal, and to deny and mortifie it.

Chap. XXXIV.

Carnal Liberty to be denied : What.

17. Another *ſelfiſh intereſt* to be denied, is, *Carnal Liberty*. A thing that ſelfiſhneſs hath ſtrangely brought of late into ſo much credit, that abundance among us think they are doing ſome ſpecial ſervice to God, their Countrey, the Church and their own ſouls, when they are but deeply engaged for the Devil, by a *ſelf-ſeeking* ſpirit, in a Carnal Courſe. For the diſcovery of this dangerous common diſeaſe, I muſt firſt tell you, that there is a threefold Liberty which muſt carefully be dif-

differenced. 1. There is an Holy, Bleſſed Liberty which no man muſt Deny. 2. There is a wicked Liberty, which no man ſhould deſire. 3. And between theſe two there is a Common, Natural, and Civil Liberty, which is good in its place, as other worldly matters are, but muſt be *denied*, when it ſtands in competition with higher and better things; and, as all other worldly matters, is Holy when it is Holily eſteemed and uſed; that is, for God; but ſinful when it is ſinfully eſteemed and uſed, and that is for *Carnal ſelf.*

I. The firſt of theſe is not to be denied, but all other Liberty to be denied for it. This Holy Liberty conſiſteth in theſe following Particulars. 1. To be freed from the Power of ſin, which is the diſability, the deformity, the death of the ſoul. 2. From the Guilt of ſin, and the wrath of God, and the Curſe of the Law. 3. To be Reſtored to God by Chriſt, in Union, Reconciliation, and Sanctification; and our enthralled ſpirits ſet free, to know, and love, and ſerve him, and delight in him. Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is Liberty, 2 *Cor.* 3. 17. God is the ſouls Freedom, who is its Lord, and life, and end, and all. 4. To be delivered from Satan as a Deceiver, and enemy, and executioner of the wrath of God. 5. To be freed from that Law or Covenant of Works, which requireth that which to us is become impoſſible. 6. To be freed from the burdenſom task of uſeleſs Ceremonies, impoſed on the Church in the times of infancy and darkneſs. 7. To be freed from the accuſations of a guilty conſcience, and thoſe *ſelf-tormentings* which in the wicked are the fore-taſtes of hell. 8. To be freed from ſuch temporal judgements here as might hinder our ſalvation, or our ſervice of God. 9. To be free from the condemning ſentence at the laſt day, and the everlaſting Torments which the wicked muſt endure. 10. And to be delivered into the bleſſed ſight of God, and the perfect fruition and Pleaſing of him, in Perfect Love, and Joy, and Praiſe, to all eternity. This is the Liberty which you muſt not deny, which I therefore name, that by the way you may ſee, that it is not for nothing that the other ſorts of Liberty are to be denied.

II. The ſecond ſort of Liberty is, that which is wicked and directly evil, which all men ſhould deny: And this is a *Freedom*

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from Righteousness, as the Apostle cals it, *Rom.* 6. 20. To be free from a voluntary subjection to God, and free from his severe and holy Laws, and free from the thoughts of holiness, and of the life to come, and free from those sighs and groans for sin, and that godly sorrow which the sanctified undergo; and to be free from all those spiritual motions and changing works upon their hearts, which the Spirit doth work on all the Saints: to be free from holy speeches, and holy prayer, and other duties, and from that strict and holy manner of living which God commandeth; to be at liberty to sin against God, and to please the flesh, and follow their own imaginations and wils, let God say what he will to the contrary: to be free to eat or drink what we love and have a mind of, and to be merry, and wanton, and lustful, and worldly, and take our course without being curbed by so precise a Law, as God hath given us: to be free from an heavenly conversation, and those preparations for death, and that communion with God which the Saints partake of: This is the wicked Liberty of the world, which the worst of carnal men desire: And the next beyond this, is a Liberty to lie in the fire of hell, and a freedom from salvation, & from the everlasting Joy and Praises of the Saints. If fredom from Grace and Holiness deserve the name of Freedom, then you may next call *Damnation* a Freedom.

And it is part also of this sinful miserable Liberty to be free from the Government, and Officers, and good Laws which rule the Church and Commonwealth. And such wretches there are in the world, that seriously judge it a desirable Liberty to be free from these. They think that their Countrey is Free, when every man may do what he list, and they have no King or other Governors, or none that will look after them, and punish their miscarriages: And they think the Churth is free, when they have no Pastors, or when Pastors have least power over them, and they may do what they list. And indeed if they were rid of Magistrates and Ministers, they were free! As a School is free that hath shut out the Master, or have rejected him, and teach and rule one another! And as a Ship is free when the Master and Pilot are thrown overboard; and as an Army is free when they have cast off or lost

their commanders: or to speak more fitly, as an Hospital is free when they are delivered from their Physitian; and as the madmen in *Bedlam* are free when they have killed, or escaped from their Keepers. As Infidels keep their Freedom, by Refusing Christ in himself: so carnal Dividers and Hereticks keep their freedom, by Refusing his Officers, and Christ in those Officers: *For he that heareth them heareth him; and he that despiseth them, despiseth him; and he that despiseth, despiseth not man but God*, Luke 10. 16. 1 Thes. 4. 8.

And another part of this ungodly Liberty, is, to be free from the exercise at least of this power of Magistrates and Ministers so far as not to be restrained from sin, though they be not free from the state of subjects. To swear, and be drunk, and live as most Ale-sellers on the damning sins of others, and make a trade of selling men their damnation, and to have no Magistrate punish them, no Officer trouble them, & no neighbour accuse them; this is their Liberty. To game, and roar, and revel, and have no body say to them, Why do you so, is part of their Liberty. To have leave without Restraint to make all others as bad as themselves, and if they are Infidels or Hereticks, to perswade other men to it: If they hold any opinion against the God that made them, against Christ, against the Spirit of God, against the Word and Laws of God, against his Ministers, his Church, his Ordinances, against any necessary point of faith, or if they have any false conceit that leads strait to Hell, that they may have full power, license and authority, to bring as many as they can to be of the same mind, that they may not be unprofitable servants to the Devil, nor go to hell alone, this is a great part of their impious *Liberty*: And because the name of *Conscience* is become honourable, they call this by the name of Liberty of *Conscience*: when indeed it is Liberty of Practice that they mean, and not Liberty of Conscience: For their Conscience cannot be altered by force, nor touched by the Sword. Its *they* that deprive men of the *Liberty* of their *Consciences*, whilest by false teaching they put out the eye of Conscience, and enslave it to sinful false conceits. And *Conscience is science*: and Error is not science, but ignorance: And therefore

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as *Error* is not *Conſcience*, but the *deſtruction of Conſcience*; ſo *Liberty to err*, is no *liberty of Conſcience*, but a *Liberty to deſtroy Conſcience*: Much leſs is it Liberty of Conſcience to ſin againſt God, and draw others from Conſcience into error, and poyſon men ſouls, and hinder the Goſpel, and promote the work and Kingdom of the Devil.

And many of our miſerable ſottiſh people take it for a part of their deſired Liberty to be free from Miniſters Spiritual Overſight and Government, and not to be Chatechiſed or called to an account, or examined about the ſtate of their ſouls, nor queſtioned about their lives, but that they may do what they will, and have Sacraments and all Ordinances on what terms and in what manner they will, and to have Miniſters bow their Judgements to theirs, and lay their Conſciences at the feet of every carnal ignorant wretch, and be but their ſervants to do what they would have them: this is the Liberty that Satans ſervants do deſire.

And with all, that they may be free from neceſſary payments for the ſafety of the Commonwealth, and from the neceſſary retribution to God, for the Church and poor, yea from giving but the Miniſters their own; all this they take for part of their liberty. But they are all ſuch liberties as Chriſt never purchaſed, and the Goſpel never beſtowed, and never made the Owners happy: It is a liberty to ſtarve their own ſouls, and go quietly to everlaſting torment, and not be moleſted by Preachers and Puritans, but to ſin againſt God, and damn themſelves, and be let alone, and have no body tell them of it, or ask them, Why will you do ſo? In a word, it is that liberty that Chriſt died to ſave his people from, and which the Goſpel would take down, and the ſpirit, miniſtry, and Ordinances would overthrow, and which no wiſe or good man hath reaſon to deſire: and it is that liberty which God will ſave all thoſe from, whom he will ſave from the flames of hell.

III. The third ſort of Liberty is that which is in it ſelf Indifferent, or to be reckoned among the common tranſitory benefits of this life, which with Gods bleſſing is a mercy; and well uſed may do good, but otherwiſe is hurtful or little worth. This Liberty is not the Natural Liberty of the will,

which in regard of its own elicite Acts is nothing but the power of *self-determination*; and in regard of internal imperate acts, is nothing but A power or freedom to do what we will. For these are so our own, if not our selves, that no man can take them from us; at least the first. Nor is it the Ethical Liberty of the soul from sin by gracious Habits: for this is ever good, as was said before. Nor is it a Political Liberty from those tyrannous Laws or practices of men that would root out the Gospel and pull down the Kingdom of Christ, and set up iniquity. This Liberty must be desired, and not denied, even when we submit our selves to persecution: but it is 1. The Civil Liberty of being from under the Government of others, and of having a hand in Government our selves. 2. The Liberty of being from under the Government of Strangers, Conquerors, or enemies. 3. The Liberty of *choosing our own Governors*, and having them not by other mens election set over us. 4. A Liberty from burdensom payments and taxes which are of no necessity to our good. 5. A liberty from arbitrary Government, and from being lyable to the meer will and passions of men. 6. A protection from the abuses and injuries of others. 7. And a liberty for our bodies from the restraint of Imprisonment. All these are things that in themselves are naturally good; and specially the two last are very great mercies. But yet as the five first are smaller matters, so all of them are but temporal transitory things, and not to be regarded in comparison of Christ and the heavenly liberties. The deerest of them must be Denied when they stand in the way of duty, and cannot be had on terms of innocency. To sin for liberty, is to leap out of the frying pan into the fire, as the Proverb is: To become the prisoner of the Devil, that we may not be the prisoners of men: to enslave the soul for the liberty of the body. Believe it, sin makes deeper galls then bolts or scourges do: Its an easie durance to lie in goal in comparison of lying in sin, or under the wrath of God. At the furtheſt, death will free you from imprisonment, but death alone will not free you from sin. It is but mens foolish conceits that makes imprisonment so grievous to the most. It is the same earth that they tread on, and the same

same air that they breath in as before. The great trouble is that they have not their wills: for when their own wills do as much confine them, it is then no trouble. I can confine my self to one room, to one chair, the far greatest part of the year for my studies: and why should I not bear as well to be so confined by another, if my own will could bnt comply with it? Never grudge at restraint or imprisonment then, but find out some imployment in it, whereby you may be serviceable to God, or at least serve him by your sufferings, and then rejoyce in it, and bring your minds to your condition, and so you may set your selves at liberty in spite of the greatest Tyrant in the world. Imprisonment is but a penal restraint: and if it be not Involuntary, its scarcely penal: it is therefore in your power whether you will be Prisoners or not, because it is in your power whether it shall be *involuntary* or not. Be but willing of your confinement, and you are at liberty; and though you are not out of the place, you are out of the prison. The same room that is a prison to the rest, is none to the keeper that guards them, because apprehending it to be for his commodity, he is willing of it, and their prison is his home. And if you do but apprehend how you are called from temptations, and have an opportunity of honouring God, or at least of being more humbled and mortified, and so bring your mind to consent to your habitation, its become your home and place of freedom: however he is unworthy of the liberty of the Saints, that cannot deny the liberty of his habitation or bodily abode for the attaining of it.

And for the things that men make such a stir about in the world, under the name of their civil liberties, some of them are no liberties, but fancies or miseries, and the rest of them are no further to be valued then they are subservient to the Kingdom of Christ and the good of souls. Conceited people call it their liberty to be governed rather by four hundred then by one, or by Popularity then by other forms of Government, and a great stir they make about this, as if their felicity did consist in it: When as the true liberty of a Commonwealth consisteth in the fullest conformity of their Laws and their execution to the will of God: in being free from all Laws or

passions of men that encourage iniquity, and are against the Gospel or the common good, and peace and welfare of the body : In a word, to have Government best fitted to the ends of Government, which is such a temporal safety and prosperity as most conduceth to the service and honour of God : But the *species* of Government is none of this liberty in it self considered. A people may be at much more liberty under a pious Monarch then an impious or unskilful Democracy. The free choice of the *most* when they are bad (as where is it better?) may enslave the best: and the *awe* and interest of the Rich is commonly such upon the people, that a free choice is somewhat strange. And that sort of Government may be fittest for One people, that is unfit for another: And their happiness lieth not in the *species* of Government, let them stretch their wits to invent new forms as long as they will; but in the Predominancy of God and his Interest in the hearts of the Governors, and in their Laws, their Officers, and Execution. This is it, and nothing but this, in Government, that will give the Commonwealth that desirable Liberty, in which their welfare doth consist.

And therefore those persons are Enemies to the Liberty of their Countrey, that under the Name, would advance such kind of Popular interest as is plainly against the interest of Christ: and must have Magistrates and Ministers restrained from doing the Work of the Omnipotent Soveraign, the one from punishing sin (if it be against the first Table, or come but under the name of conscience) and the other from exercising Church-discipline, and all under pretence of the Peoples Liberties. All these are carnal Liberties to be Denied.

CHAP.

Chap. XXXV.

Our Native Countrey and Habitations denied.

18. ANother part of *Carnal self-interest* to be denied, is, *Our Native Countrey, or place of habitation, with all the Comforts and accommodations they afford us.* It is lawful to have some special Love to our own Countrey; but not such as shall prevail against the love of Christ, or seem sufficient to entangle us in sin. We must shew our Love to it principally by desiring and endeavouring, that Gods name may be hallowed, and his Kingdom maintained, and his will fulfilled among and by our Countrymen: But if they should turn enemies to the Gospel or to Godliness, we must love the *servants* of God *abroad* much better then his *enemies* at *home*; and wish the success of his servants though of other Countries, against his enemies, though they were of our own. And if we cannot serve God or enjoy the freedom of a good conscience at home, another Nation, though it were in the utmost parts of the Earth, where we may better serve God, must seem a better place to us. And if we be banished, or necessitated to forsake our Country, we must not stick at it, for the cause of Christ. It is none of the greatest tryals to be put to remove from one Countrey to another, as long as we have necessaries, whereever we come. We have the same God to be with us, and take care of us, beyond sea, as at home: the same earth, and air, and sun to shine upon us: The same Spirit, and grace, and promises do accompany us: The samt Saints of God, and ordinances of Worship may be had in other Countries as our own. Its a kind of childishness to make such a matter of being driven out of one Kingdom into another, when we have the same or greater mercies in the other. All is but our Fathers house; and we do but remove from room to room. The Earth is the Lords and the fulness thereof. Psal. 24. 1. As I said before of Imprisonment, so I say of Banishment; It is in your own Wils by Consenting to it, to make it no banishment. If you will make an af-

affliction and a great matter of it you may. A Merchant or Factor can live for his commodity, far from home, even among Turks and Infidels, and take it for no baniſhment: Much more ſhould you do ſo, for the ſake of Chriſt. Every place is our own Countrey where our Maſters work lieth. We are but pilgrims; and as long as we are not out of our way, we need not complain much for being out of our Countrey. Indeed we are here but *ſtrangers*, and this is *not our Countrey*, and therefore let us not overlove it upon a miſtake. The Apoſtles of Chriſt did purpoſely leave their Contreys, and travail about the Countreys of the world, to bring them the doctrine of ſalvation by Chriſt. And is it not better be walking Lights to illuminate the world, then Candles ſhut up within the wals of our own habitation? Heb. 11. 8, 9, 10. [*By faith* Abraham *when he was called to go into a place which he ſhould after receive for an inheritance, obeyed, and he went out, not knowing whither he went. By faith he ſojourned in the Land of promiſe as in a ſtrange Countrey, dwelling in Tabernacles —— for he looked for a City which had foundations, whoſe builder and maker is God.* ver. 13, 14, 15, 16. [*They confeſſed that they were ſtrangers and pilgrims on the earth; For they that ſay ſuch things, declare plainly that they ſeek a Countrey: And truly if they had been mindfull of that Countrey from whence they came out, they might have had opportunity to have returned: But now they deſire a better Countrey, that is, an heavenly: wherefore God is not aſhamed to be called their God; for he hath prepared for them a City*] It was the ſoreſt kind of baniſhment that the Saints endured, thats mentioned, *Heb.* 11. 37, 38. and yet they patiently underwent it. [*They wandred about in ſheepskins and goatskins, being deſtitute, afflicted, tormented: Of whom the world was not worthy: they wandred in deſerts and mountains, and in dens and caves of the earth*] We judge our ſelves unworthy of Chriſt and the new *Jeruſalem* and our Heavenly Countrey, if we cannot deny an earthly ſinfull Countrey for them.

CHAP.

Chap. XXXVI.

Bodily health and ease from torments.

19. BUT a far greater *Interest* of *self* to be denyed, doth consist *in our bodily health and ease and freedom from those pains and torments, which persecutors use to inflict upon the godly*. An averseness to suffering, is natural to man, and in it self no sin, But an *excessive* averseness, doth signifie too much tenderness of the flesh, and too little power of Reason, which should quiet the mind, when it cannot abate the pain of the body; and must cause us to submit to a lesser evil, to avoid a greater: or to obtain a greater good, then it depriveth us of: *Paul* and *Silas* could sing with their bodies sore, and their feet in the stocks. To be *joyfull in tribulation* should be no strange matter to a Saint: much more with a patient submission to undergo it. We may not thrust our selves into the fire, nor choose suffering without a call; but we must suffer rather then sin, and choose the wounds or hurts of the body before the wounds and losses of the soul. But because flesh and blood will draw back, and make too great a matter of sufferings, I shall briefly give you ten Considerations that may perswade you herein to deny your selves; and in two cases I desire you to make use of them: First, *in case you have no way to escape suffering, but by sinning*: then deny your selves and *choose* to suffer. Secondly, *in case of Gods afflictions which unavoidably lye upon you*: then deny your selves by a quiet and patient submission: And for both consider.

1. That is the best condition for us, in which we may be most serviceable to God. And if we suffer for Righteousness, we may serve God as well in such suffering as in a prosperous state: Or if God himself afflict us, we may serve him in our affliction: Our patience then is the service that we are called to. The sufferings of the Saints have done very much to the promoting of the Gospel and building of the Church: Men will see that there is somewhat *worth* the suffering for, in the Christian Religion, and see that Heaven is taken by believers for a *certain* thing, when they can let go earth for it: They will

be moved to enquire, what it is that moves you to ſuch conſtancy and patience. And why ſhould we not be willing of that condition, in which we do our Maſter the beſt ſervice, what ever the doing of it ſhall caſt us? The commodity of our *end* is the chiefeſt commoditie.

2. That is the beſt condition for us in which we may *have moſt* of God. But certainly we may have as much and uſually more of God in *ſuffering*, eſpecially for his cauſe, then we can have in proſperity; eſpecially when we ſin to eſcape theſe ſufferings. Is it *bodily eaſe*, or *God* that you ſet moſt by? It will be ſeen by your choice. If you prefer your eaſe before him, you muſt expect to have no better then you chooſe. If you prefer him before your eaſe and and proſperity, you muſt be gladder of God with adverſity and pain, then of proſperity and eaſe without him. A beaſt hath health and eaſe as well as you, and yet you will not think him as happy. If you are tormented or loſe your health for Chriſt, you loſe nothing but what a Turk or Infidel hath, yea but what a beaſt hath, as well as you! But you may have that of God by the advantage of your ſuffering, that none but Saints have. And Gods preſence can make a ſuffering ſtate as ſweet as a proſperous. And he hath given you ground in his promiſes to expect it, Iſa. 43. 1, 2, 3. [*When thou paſſeſt through the fire, I will be with thee*———] 1 Cor. 10. 13. [*There hath no temptation taken you, but what is common to man: but God is faithfull who will not ſuffer you to be tempted above that you are able; but will with the temptation alſo make a way to eſcape, that you may be able to bear it,*] 1 Pet. 4. 14. [*If ye be reproached for the name of Chriſt, happy are ye: for the ſpirit of glory and of God reſteth upon you: On their part he is evil ſpoken of, but on your part he is glorified*] ver. 16. [*If any man ſuffer as a Chriſtian, let him not be aſhamed, but let him glorifie God on this behalf.*] What is the Scripture fuller of, then comforting promiſes to the ſufferers for Chriſt? To fly from ſuch ſufferings then, is but to fly from the preſence of God, and our own conſolations.

3. At leaſt theſe *ſufferings further our ſanctification*, and *make us better*. And is not that our beſt condition that *makes us beſt*? Common experience as well as Scripture may ſatisfie

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us that a suffering state doth very much further humiliation and mortification, and bring men to a deeper sense of sin, and help all the truths of God to work, and make them more sensible and serious then in prosperity. Then we do not only hear but feel, that sin is evil, and that the world is vain, and that the threatnings of God are true. Why Christian, if thou didst but know that thou shouldst have more of the spirit, and its graces, and less of sin, in a suffering state, then in ease and plenty, wouldst thou not even choose it and be glad of it? Is not sin worse then suffering to thee, and holiness better then ease and peace? Alas, what senseless, careless persons should we be, if it were not for the help of suffering! Grace useth to work by means: and this is the common means.

4. Consider, that *pain and suffering we shall have, whether for Christ or not*: The worst men undergo almost as much by ordinary sicknesses & losses & crosses, as the Martyrs do that suffer for Christ; sin *will* bring suffering: & its better have that which is sanctified by the Interest of Christ, then that which is not.

5. And a Christian that hath *so much a do to curb and rule the flesh in prosperity*, me thinks should the more patiently bear adversity, because God sets in by it, and helps him to subdue the flesh, and tame the body and bring it in subjection: And as it is but this burdensome flesh that suffereth, which hath been the cause of so much suffering to our minds; so our warfare against this flesh, which we mannage through the course of our lives, goes on more prosperously in the time of its sufferings, then in prosperity. A weakned enemy is easilier conquered. Do not therefore too much take part with the suffering flesh, but self-denyingly justifie the proceedings of the Lord.

6. And consider that the *pains and suffering will be but short*. It is but a little while, and you will feel no more then if you had felt nothing. And that which *shortly will not be*, is next to that which *is not*. As it makes all the pleasures and glory of the world, to be a dream and next to nothing, because its but a while, and they are gone, and never return again: So it makes our sufferings next to nothing that they are passing away, and almost over. And then all tears will be wiped from your eyes; and pain will be forgotten, or re-

membred only to encreaſe your joy. When you are paſt the brunt and ſafe with Chriſt, you will never repent of your ſufferings on earth, nor will it trouble you then to think of the ſhame or ſickneſs or pain and torment that here you were put to undergo. Yet a little while and all wil be over.

7. In the mean time, conſider alſo, that *they are all Deſerved ſufferings.* You deſerve them from *God*, though not from *man:* Nay they are a thouſand fold leſs then your deſervings: If free grace have pardoned you the main, and reſcued you from the torments of Hell, me thinks the remembrance of this wonderfull mercy, ſhould make you patiently bear the Fatherly chaſtiſements that tend to the perfecting your deliverance.

8. And ſo much the rather becauſe *They are ſufferings more gainfull to you, then the greateſt proſperity is to the world.* When you have ſuffered for Chriſt as much as your natures are able to bear, you need not fear being looſers by him: As he is engaged by promiſe to make you amends, and to give you the reward of the inheritance of glory, ſo he is eaſily able to accompliſh it. *All* the Saints of God are in the way to glory: but his ſuffering Saints are in the *neereſt* way. *All* his ſervants are *unſpeakably* gainers by him: but his *ſufferers* are in the *moſt thriving* way: *They* ſhall have an *eminency* of Reward, or a Reward above the common Reward, Rev. 7. 14. [*Theſe are they that come out of great tribulation, and have waſhed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. Therefore are they before the Throne of God and ſerve him day and night in his Temple, and he that ſitteth on the Throne ſhall dwell among them*] The Churches therefore glory in their Martyrs, and for the patience and faith of Chriſtians in all the perſecutions and tribulations which they endure; *A manifeſt token of the righteous judgement of God, that they may be counted worthy of the Kingdom of God, for which they ſuffer: ſeeing it is a righteous thing with God to recompence tribulation to them that trouble them; and to them that are troubled, Reſt with the Saints,* 2 Theſſ. 1. 4, 5, 6. Mat. 19. 27, 28, 29. *Peter* ſaid *behold we have forſaken all and followed thee; what ſhall we have therefore? And Jeſus ſaid unto them, Verily I ſay unto you, that ye which have followed me, in the Regeneration, when the Son of man ſhall ſit in the Throne*

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of his glory, ye shall also sit on twelve Thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel: *and every one that hath forsaken houses, or brethren, or Sisters, or Father, or Mother, or Wife, or Children, or Lands for my names sakes shall receive an hundred fold, and shall inherit everlasting life.* And is it not better suffer on these terms of unconceivable advantage, then to suffer in a natural way for nothing?

9. And consider, that if suffering seem so great a matter to you that you are resolved though by the way of sin, to avoid it, you will scape it at so dear a rate that you will wish a thousand times you had endured it. There is no scaping of Christian suffering when you are called to it, but by running into eternal suffering. There is no scaping the Prison and torment and fire of Martyrdom, when you are called to it, but by running into the fire of Hell. God can deliver you indeed on easier terms, by forbearing to call you to it, or rescuing by his power: But you cannot rescue your selves by refusing to suffer and yielding to sin, without paying dearer for your freedom then it is worth. And therefore deny your *selves*, and bear what God shall call you to, lest Christ deny you and make you suffer a thousand fold more to all eternity.

10. Lastly, consider also, that this part of *self-denyal* is it that Christ hath fully and purposely taught us, by his own example. Are you better then the Lord of life? And did they not use him worse then you are used? Do they slander you? and did they not so by him, calling him a gluttonous person and a wine-bibber, and a friend of Publicans and sinners, a Sabboth-breaker, an enemy to *Cæsar*, a Deceiver, yea one that had a Devil, and cast out Devils by *Belzebub*? Do they put a Fools Coat on you, and a Reed in your hand, and make a laughing stock of you? Remember what they did by Christ. They mixed scorn and cruelty together, when they crowned him with a Crown of Thorns, and struck him when they had covered his eyes, and bid him read who smote him. And do they worse then this by you? They spit in his face; and saved a Murderer, that he might be sure to die. And do they worse then this by you? [*Run therefore with patience the race that is set before you, looking to Jesus the Author and Finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him, endured the Cross, despising*

despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the Throne of God: For consider him that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your mind,] Heb. 12. 1, 2, 3. [*If when ye do well and suffer for it, ye take it patiently, this is acceptable with God; for even hereunto were ye called; because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example that ye should follow his steps, who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth: Who when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered threatned not, but committed himself to him that judgeth righteously,* 1 Pet. 2. 20, 21, 22, 23.

Upon all these considerations you may see that in the greatest afflictions or torments of the flesh, we have reason enough for the practice of *self-denyal*! And therefore as Christ used *Peter, Mat.* 16. when he perswaded him to have favoured *himself*, and to have avoided suffering when it was necessary for us, bidding him [*Get behind me Sathan, thou art an offence unto me; for thou savourest not the things that be of God, but those that be of men*] *v.* 23. so do you deal by carnal *self*, when it would perswade you to favour your selves and put by suffering by yielding to sin: take this *self* to be but a *Satan* to you, that savoureth not heavenly things but earthly, and command it to be silent and to get behind you; and do not so much as make your flesh of your Counsel, nor hearken to any of its advice, in case of suffering for Christ.

Chap. XXXVII.

Natural Life to be denyed.

20. BUT the greatest point of self-denyal is yet behind: Nothing is so neer to *Self* as *Life*. Nothing that nature doth so highly value, and dearly love, and tenderly look to, and unwillingly let go. And yet *this* also must be *denyed for Christ*. All other parts of selfish interest are as it were summed up and contracted in this. And many a one can yield in other points, that when he comes to this, is utterly stalled and will go away sorrowfull, rather then follow Christ

Christ to the Death. Nothing in this world is so dear to natural man as his life. And therefore death is a thing that he knows not how to choose, nor to submit to, if he could avoid it.

In three cases only I remember that Heathens themselves have chosen death. First in case of some extream torment or other misery, which they had no other hope to prevent or end. But this was but a choosing a speedier or easier Death before a more grievous death, though remote; or before a death that had so great a misery for its fore-runner: or at least before such a life as is a continual death. And so the conquered Heathens would frequently kill themselves, to prevent a more dishonourable cruel death from the hand of the Conqueror; And so many a one in uncurable misery wisheth rather to die then endure it; partly because that the suffering is so great as to overcome all the comforts of life (For I yield that some degrees of misery with life are more terrible to nature then death;) and partly because that they know they must die at last however. Secondly in a desire of *fame*, that they may leave behind them an honourable name when they are dead. But this is not to desire death but life. Fain they would live for ever: and because they know that it cannot be obtained (on earth,) they had rather die some honourable death a little sooner, that their names may live, when they are dead, then to die ignominiously shortly after. Thirdly, And some have chosen to die for the publike good of their Countreys. But as its very uncertain whether the desire of a *living Name* were not their greater motive, so it was but a choosing a present death for their Countrey, before a latter unavoidable death without any such advantage. In all these cases a natural man may venture on death, that knows he cannot scape it long, but must shortly die, whether he will or no. But if they could avoid it, there's very few would submit to death, but believers: and none but in one of these cases. 1. To end or avoid some extream intolerable, uncurable misery. 2. To deliver their Countrey or friends. 3. And whether any would do it upon their ungrounded hopes of better things in the life to come, I leave to consideration. But if it be

taken

taken for granted, that a natural man may love 1. The comforts of life above life it self. 2. And the good of his Countrey, or the world, or his children above his life. 3 Or some carnal felicity falsly conceited to be had in another life; yet it is certain that none but a sanctified believer can *Love God* better then *his Life*, or can preferr those spititual heavenly joyes which consist *in the holy Love and Fruition of God*, before his life: And therefore he that *for these can deny his Life, is indeed a Christian: and none but he.* Though it be an ungrateful word to the ears, of some, I must say it again, *and none but he.* For this is the very point in which Christ for instance, doth put our self-denial to the trial. *He that will save his life, shall lose it*] Whether you Love an immortal holy life with God, or this earthly fleshly life better, is the great question on which it will be resolved whether you are Christians or Infidels at the heart, and whether you are the heirs of heaven or hell. *Some Love* to God may be in the unsanctified; but not a love to him above their lives: and in some cases they may *submit to death*; but not for the *Love of God.* But both these set together, that is, a *submitting to Death for the Love of God*, or a *Loving of God above this life*, is the most infallible proof of your sincerity.

I confess, flesh and blood must needs think this a very hard saying; and though they might consent to acknowledge it a Duty, and a Reasonable thing to die for Christ, and a note of excellency, and a commendable qualification of some few extraordinary Saints, yet it goeth very hardly down with them, that it should be the lowest measure of saving grace, and that the weakest Christian must have it that will be saved; For say they, What can the strongest do more then die for Christ? But to this I answer, 1. There is no room for objections against so plain a Word of God. It is the wisdom of God, and not our Reason that disposeth of the Crown of life: and therefore it is his Wisdom and not our Reason must determine by what we shall attain it. And if God say plainly, that *If any man come to Christ, and hate not his own life*, (that is, love it not so much less then Christ, that for his sake he can use it as a hated thing is used) *he cannot be his Disciple*] Luke 14. 26. it is too late for the vote of man, or all the clamor of foolish

fooliſh reaſon to recall this reſolution. The word of God will ſtand, when they have talkt againſt it never ſo long: we may deſttoy our ſelves by daſhing againſt it, but we cannot deſtroy or fruſtrate it. 2. And whereas men ask, *what can the ſtrongeſt do more then die for Chriſt?* I anſwer, Abundance more: They can die for him with far greater Love, and Zeal, and Readineſs, and Joy, then the weak can do: and ſo bring much more honour to him by their death. Though there be no higher way of outward expreſſing our Love to Chriſt, then by dying for him; yet the inward work of Love may be in very different degrees in perſons that uſe the ſame expreſſion of it. Some may come to the ſtake with a little Love comparatively, and ſome with fervent hot affections: Some have much ado to yield to die; and ſome die ſo cheerfully, that they rejoyce in the opportunity of honouring God, and paſſing to him. Yea and in the Expreſſions there is much difference in the manner: ſome give up themſelves with ſo much readineſs as works more on the ſtanders by then their meer patience or the death it ſelf. And ſome are drawn ſo hardly to it, as drowneth much of the honour and fruit of their martyrdom. Of this read Mr. *Pinks* Serm. on *Luke* 14.26.

Object. But Nature is of God: and nature teacheth us to Love and ſave our lives: and is it like that the God of Nature will Command and teach us to caſt them away, and ſo contradict his own Law of Nature? Anſw. 1. As Nature teacheth you to love your lives, ſo God doth not forbid you. But 2. Is it not Natural to man to be Reaſonable, as well as to be ſenſitive and animate? To have a reaſonable ſoul, as to have a temporal life? 3. And doth not Reaſon tell us by the light of Nature, that God ſhould be loved better then our Lives? If it did not, yet by the help of ſupernatural light, even Reaſon clearly tell us this. And it is no contradiction for God to bid you, [Love your lives, but Love him better.] And he that bids you ſeek the preſervation of your lives, doth plainly except, that you reſign them to his diſpoſe, and that you ſeek not to ſave them from him, when he commandeth you to lay them down. So that it is not ſimply againſt Nature, to conſent to die: bnt when it is for him that is the Lord and End of life, it is agreeable to

Nature; that is, though it be against our natural inclination as we are Animate, and Sensitive; yet is it agreeable to our true Nature as Reasonable: And therefore lay altogether, and it is to be said to be agreeable to Nature simply in such a case; because it is agreable to the Principal part in nature, which should be predominant; It is agreeable to natnre also, that Reason should dispose of the inferiour powers of the soul.

Object. *But when you have said all that you can, as long as you plead against my nature, I cannot consent to what you say; words are but wind: To perswade me to consent to die, is as much as to perswade me not to feel when I am hurt, or not to be hungry or thirsty or sleepy, which are not in my power, because these things are Natural.* *Answ.* 1. Though hunger and thirst and other natural and sensitive appetites or passions, be not in your power, yet a consent of the will to deny these is in your power. As natural as it is to hunger and thirst, your superiour faculty of Reason can prevail with you to suffer hunger and thirst in a Seige or sickness, when the suffering of it will save your life. You will be ruled by your Physitian to forbear not only many a dish but many a meal which your appetite desireth. And your Reason can perswade you to suffer the opening of a vein, and the drawing out of your own blood, yea or the cutting off a member, when it is to save your life, for all that *feeling* and self-love is natural to you. And you are not acquainted with the nature of Friendship if you would not suffer much for a friend; nor with humane affections if you would not suffer much for parents, or children or your Countrey; so that your will is free, though your sense be not free, nor your natural appetite. Though you cannot choose but feel when you are hurt, you might consent to that feeling for a greater good. 2. And according to the tenour of this Objection, you may as wisely and honestly plead for most of the wickedness of the world, and say *It is natural to me to lust, and therefore I may play the Adulterer and fulfil it: It is natural to me to desire meat and drink: and therefore I may eat and drink as long as I desire it. It is natural to me to seek to hurt those that I am much angry with, or hate: and therefore I may beat or kill them.*] If you must deny the Passions and

and sensitive appetite, and the inferiour faculties of nature in one thing, why not in another? These lower powers were made to be ruled by reason, as beasts are made to be ruled by men, and more. And therefore seeing this Argument from Nature is but from the brutish part of Nature, it is but a brutish Argument. And if yet you say, that for all these words, *Death is so great an enemy to you, that you cannot choose it*; I answer, that is because your reason is not illuminated and elevated by faith, to see the Necessity of choosing it; and to see those higher and better things, which by this means you may obtain. Had you that heavenly life of faith and love which the spirit worketh in the Saints, it would carry you above this present life, and take you up with higher matters, and shew you that (and so shew it you) as should procure your own consent to die.

But because this is the great point that Christ doth purposely here try our self-denyal by, and a point of such great necessity to be lookt after, I shall stay a little longer on it, while I give you, first some Reasons to move you, and 2. Some Directions to assist you, to get a self-denying submission to Death when Christ requireth it.

The many lamentable defects in grace which the inordinate fear of death doth intimate, I have already opened in the fourth Part of the *Saints Rest*: and therefore may not now repeat them, but shall add some few Considerations more.

Chap. XXXVIII.

Twenty Reasons for denying Life.

1. Consider, that *Our Lives are not our Own*; but God that doth require them is the Absolute Lord of them. More truly then you are owner of any thing that you have in the world, is he the Owner of your lives and you. And therefore both in Reason and Justice we should be content that he dispose of his own. If he may not freely dispose of you and

your lives, you may as well deny him the disposse of any thing, and so deny him to be God: for he hath the same right to you as to any thing else, and the same power over you. And therefore if you consent that he shall be God (for which he needs not your consent) you must consent that he be the Owner and Disposer of all, and of you as well as all things else: Otherwise he is not God.

2. You can be content that the *lives of others*, yea that all the world be at Gods Dispose: In reason you cannot wish it should be otherwise. You are content that the lives of Emperors and Kings that are greater then you, should be at his Dispose? And is there not the same Reason that he dispose of *your* life as of *theirs*? Are you better then they? or more your own? or hath the world more need of you then them? or rather is it not unreasonable *selfishness* that makes so unreasonable a difference with you? If Reason might serve, the case is plain.

3. You are contented that far *greater* matters then your lives should be at Gods dispose: The Sun in its course, the frame of nature, Heaven and Earth and all therein are at his dispose, and would you wish it otherwise? Dayes and Nights, and Summer and Winter, and times and seasons are at his dispose; and you dare not murmur that all the year is not Summer or day-light, and that there is any Night or Winter. The Angels of Heaven are at his dispose to do his will, and are content to be used on earth for your service, and they desire not to be from under his dispose? And should *you* desire it? or rather desire that his will may be done on earth as it is in heaven! If you would not have the Crowns and Kingdoms of the world at his Dispose, and Heaven and Earth at his Dispose, you would not have him to be God: But if you would have these *greatest* things at his dispose, what are you then, that *your lives* should be excepted?

4. *Who* would you have to be the Disposer of mens Lives but God? Is any *other* fit for the undertaking? No other can *give* life, but he! And no other can preserve and continue it but he. If your life had been in any creatures hand, you had been dead long ago: For no creature is able to uphold it self, much

much leſs another alſo. Is any Creature *wiſe* enough to order the world and the affairs thereof? Is any Creature *powerfull* enough, to diſpoſe of the world and all things in it? Is any Creature *good* enough to do it without the Communication of its imperfection which would diſorder and deſtroy all? I know you make no doubt of any of theſe things. No Creature is fit to be God; and therefore none is fit to undertake the work of God; And therefore it muſt be God or none that muſt have the Diſpoſal of your lives and you.

But I know what it is that *ſelf* would have! You would have the Diſpoſal of your *own* lives, or elſe have God to diſpoſe of them as you would have him, which comes all to one. But how unreaſonable is this? Would *you alone* have the Diſpoſal of your *own lives*? or would you have *all men* elſe in the world alſo to have the Diſpoſal of *theirs*? If *all* ſhould have this Priviledge, what a miſerable priviledge would it prove? No man then would die, and then either you muſt forbear marriage, or what would you do with your poſterity, when there were no room on earth? And then you could not puniſh a Malefactor with death! And what a world would it be, if all men were Diſpoſers of themſelves, when there would be as many different ends and minds as men? every man would be for himſelf, and an enemy to others; and the world would run every man on his own head; and a madder confuſion then can be imagined, would ſeize on all. If you would have every man have the diſpoſe of his own life, you would have as many Gods as Men, and ſo have no God; and you would have as many Kings or Rulers as men, and ſo have no Ruler? and you would have the world be no world, when God were to them as no God. And if you would not have it thus with all, what reaſon have you to deſire it for your ſelf? What are you more then all the world, that you ſhould be exempted from the common ſtate of mortals, and be at your own diſpoſal more then they, and be inſtead of God unto your ſelves?

5. You think it neither cruelty or injuſtice, that the lives of *bruits* ſhould be much at *your* diſpoſe! Your poor fellow-creatures muſt die when you require it. Birds and Beaſts and

Fishes, even multitudes of them must die to feed you, yea often for your delight, to make you a Feast, when you have no necessity. The most harmless sheep you will not spare; The most laborious Ox, the most beautifull Bird, must give up their lives to satisfie your pleasure. And is not God ten thousand thousand times even infinitely more above you, then you are above your fellow-creatures? Is one creature fitter to kill another, and afterwards devour it, and become its grave, then God to dispose of the *Lives* of all.

6. *Where* could you *wish* your *Lives* to be *better*, then in the hand of the most wise and gratious God? If you may rest content, or have confidence in *any*, it is in him. You need not *doubt* of his *Goodness*, for he is *Goodness* and *Love* it self. And therefore though you see not the world to come that you are passing to, yet as long as you know that you are in the hands of Love it self, what cause have you of dissquiet or distrust? And that you know that he is *wise* as well as Good, and *Almighty* as well as Wise, and therefore as he meaneth you no harm, (if you are his children) so he will not mistake, nor fail in the performance: You need not fear lest your happiness should miscarry for want of skill in him that is Omniscient, or for want of will in him that is your Father, or for want of Power in him that is Omnipotent. You may far better trust God with your lives, then your selves. For you have not wisdom enough to know what is best for you; nor skill to accomplish it, nor Power to go through with it: Nay you love not your selves so well as God doth love you. Did you but believe this, you would better trust him. You can trust your selees in a narrow Ship, upon the wide and raging Seas, when you never saw the Countrey that you are going to; and all becaufe you believe that the voyage is for your commodity, and that you have a skilfull Pilot. And cannot you commend your souls into the hand of God, to convey you through death to the invisible glory, as confidently as you dare commit your lives to the conduct of a man, and to a tottering Ship in a hazardous Ocean? You can trust your lives on the skill of a Physitian; And cannot you trust them on the will of God? If you had your *choice* whether your lives should

should be at your own dispose, or Gods, you should far rather choose that God might dispose of them then your selves: As it is better for an Infant to be guided and disposed of, by the Parents then by it self. A *Good King* will not kill his own Subjects needlesly: And a natural Father or Mother will not needlesly kill their own Children: yea a very brute will tenderly cherish their young: And do you think that God who is infinitely good, will causelesly or injuriously take away your lives? or that he doth not mean you good even in your death?

Object. *But how can I think it for my good to die? and to have my nature dissolved?* Answ. *Paul* did *desire to depart or be dissolved, and to be with Christ as best of all*, Phil. 1.23. And did not he know what was for his good as well as you? He was *willing rather to be absent from the body and present with the Lord, then at home in the body and absent from the Lord; and therefore groaned earnestly desiring to be clothed upon with his house which is from heaven, that mortality might be swallowed up of life*, 2 Cor. 5. 1, 2, 4, 6, 8. When the Hen hath sate to hatch her yong ones, they must leave the shell as good for nothing, and must come into a world which they never saw before. And what of that? Should they murmur at the breaking of their former habitation? or fear the passage into so light, so wide, so strange a place, in comparison of that which they were in before? No more should we murmur at the breaking of these bodies, and casting by the shell of flesh, and passing under the conduct of Angels, into the presence of our Lord. God is but hatching us here by his spirit, that he may bring us out into the light of glory. And should we grudge at this?

7. And what if God call you to sacrifice your lives to him, as he called *Abraham* to sacrifice his Son? What if he call you to come to him by a persecutors hand? or at least to be willing of your natural death? He calls you but to give up a life which you cannot keep; and to do that willingly, which else you must do whether you will or not: Willing or unwilling, die you must! How loth soever you are, you are sure to die. You may turn you every way, and look about you on the right hand and the left, to all the friends and means in the world, and you will never find a medicine that will

here

here procure immortality, nor ever ſcape the hands of death. *It is appointed to all men once to die, and after that the Judgement*, Heb. 9. 27. And no man can change the Decrees of Heaven. And ſeeing all your turnings and unwillingneſs cannot avoid it, is it not better ſubmit to it willingly then unwillingly? God doth impoſe it on you as a neceſſity. Your willingneſs may make a vertue of Neceſſity, and out of Neceſſity extract a reward: but your unwillingneſs may turn your ſuffering into your ſin, and a Neceſſary death unto an unneceſſary miſery now (and hereafter if you be not true believers) as *Paul* ſaith of his Miniſterial labours, 1 Cor. 9. 16, 17. *If I do this thing willingly, I have a reward: but if againſt my will, a diſpenſation is committed to me: for neceſſity is laid upon me*—] So I may ſay in the preſent caſe: If you give up your lives willingly in the love of God, you have a Reward; but if you do not, Neceſſity is upon you, and die you muſt whether you will or no. You may ſcape the Reward by your unwillingneſs, but death you cannot eſcape. And me thinks you ſhould ſee that its little thanks to you, to give up that life which you cannot keep; And yet this is all that God requireth. Perhaps you think, that though you cannot keep it ſtill, yet ſomewhat longer you may keep it. But you be not ſure of that. The next hour may God deprive you of it. And O what a dreadfull thing it were, if as ſoon as you have denied God your lives, he ſhould ſnatch them from you in his fury, and caſt you into Hell! and if he ſhould diſtrain for his own as ſoon as you have denied it him! and you ſhould die as enemies that would not die as Martyrs, and as his Friends! And in this ſence hath my Text been many a time fulfilled, *He that will ſave his Life ſhall loſe it.*

8. Conſider alſo that it is upon terms of the higheſt advantage imaginable to your ſelves, that God calls you to reſign and lay down your lives. It is not indeed to *loſe* them, but to *ſave* them, as my Text doth promiſe you [*He that loſeth his life ſhall ſave it.*] No more then you loſe your cloaths which you put off at Night and put on again in the Morning: Or rather, no more then you loſe your louſie rotten rags, when you put them off at Night, and are to have in the Morning a Suit of Princely attire

tire in their ſtead. Will any man ſay, theſe rags are loſt? At leaſt they will not ſay that the man is a loſer by the change. that is not loſt that is committed to God, upon the ground of a promiſe. Nor that which is laid out in his Service, at his command. Reaſon will tell us, that no man can be a loſer by a courſe of ſubmiſſive Obedience to God. You cannot be at ſo much coſt for him, or offer him ſo dear a ſervice, which he is not able and willing to ſatisfie you for a thouſand fold. God will not be beholden to any man. You cannot bring him in your debt, beyond what he doth by his bountifull promiſe: But if you could, he would not continue in your debt. You'l make nothing of your death, if you do not either undergoe it for Chriſt, or bear it ſubmiſſively by the power of heavenly love conſtraining you. Meerly to die whether you will or no, as a fruit of ſin, is common to the moſt ungodly men: But if the love of God can make you voluntarily ſubmit to death (whether natural, or violent from perſecutors) what a glorious advantage may you make of it? You will 1. Put your ſalvation more out of doubt then any other courſe in this world could do. For whoſoever periſheth, its moſt certain that ſuch as theſe ſhall be ſaved. 2. And therefore you may die with the greateſt confidence and joy, as having ſeen the matter of your doubts removed, and dying in the very exerciſe of thoſe graces that have the promiſe of ſalvation: and in ſuch a ſtate as hath the fulleſt and moſt frequent promiſes in the Goſpel. 3. And then the Crown of Martyrdom is the moſt glorious Crown. You will not have an ordinary place in heaven. Theſe are that part of the Heavenly Hoſt that ſtand neereſt to the Throne of God, and that praiſe him with the higheſt joyes, who hath brought them through tribulations, and redeemed them by his blood. If a man ſhould make a motion to you to exchange your cottage for a Pallace and a Kingdom, you would not ſtick at it as if it were againſt you, becauſe you muſt leave your ancient home: And how much leſs ſhould you be againſt it, when you are but moved to ſtep out of your ruinous Cottage into glory, when it would ſhortly fall upon your heads, and you muſt leave it whether you will or no, for nothing!

9. What reason have you to be so tender of the flesh? Is it the greatness of its suffering that you stick at? Why, you put poor Beasts and Birds to as much, and so do the Butchers daily for your use: and *they* must suffer it. And why should the body be so dear to you? for the *matter* of it, what is it but earth? and wherein is it more excellent then the beasts that perish? I think God hath purposely cloathed your soule with so poor a dress, that you should be the less unwilling to be uncloathed, and might learn to set more by your souls then by your bodies, and to make more carefully provision for them. It seems he hath purposely lodged you in so poor a cottage, that you should not be at too much care for it, nor be too loth to leave it. You have its daily Necessities and Infirmities and pains, and somewhat of its filth and loathsomness, to tell you of its meanness? And why should you be so loth that so poor a cottage, so frail a body should be turned to dust? Dust it is, and to dust it is sentenced. When the soul hath left it but a week, men can scare endure to see it or to smell it? And should the breaking of such an earthen Vessell be so unpleasing a thing to you? And for its usefulness, though so far as it is obedient it was serviceable to your souls, and God, yet was it so refractory, ill disposed and disobedient, that it proved no better then your enemie. Many a temptation it hath entertained and cherished; and many a sin hath it drawn you to commit; Those senses have let in a world of vanity; Those wandring eyes have called in covetousness, and pride and lust. Those greedy appetites have been so eager on the bait, that they have too oft born down your faith and reason, and drawn you to excess in meats and drinks, for matter or manner, for quality or quantity, or both. Many a groan those sins have cost you, and many a smarting day they have caused you, and a sad uncomfortable life you have had by reason of them, in comparison of what you might have had. And this flesh hath been the Mother or the Nurse of all. You were engaged by your Baptismal Covenant to fight against it, when you entered into the Church; and if you are Christians, this combate hath been your daily work, and much of the business of your lives. And yet are you loth to have the victory, and see your ene-

my,

my under feet? Do you fight against it as for the life of your souls, and yet are you afraid lest death should hurt it, or break it down? Have you fought your selves friends with it, that you are so tender of it? when you are the greatest friends to it, it will be the most dangerous enemy to you. And do not think that it is only sin, and not the body, that is the flesh, that is called your enemy in Scripture. For though it be not the Body as such, or as obedient to the soul, yet is it the Body as inclining to creatures, from which the sinful soul cannot restrain it; and it is the body as having an inordinate sensitive appetite and imagination, and so distempered, as that it rebels against the Spirit, and casteth off the rule of Reason, and would not be curbed of its desires, but have the rule of all it self. Was it not the very flesh it self that *Paul* saith he fought against, and kept under, and brought into subjection, lest he should be a cast-away? 1 *Cor.* 9. 26, 27. why should sin be called [*Flesh* and *Body*] but that it is the Body or Flesh that is the principal seat of those sins that are so called. *If you live after the flesh, ye shall die; but if ye through the Spirit do mortifie the deeds of the Body, ye shall live*, Rom. 8. 13. *If ye sow to the flesh, of the flesh ye shall reap corruption*, Gal. 6. 8. That which is first in Being, is first in sin: But it is the Flesh or Embrio endued with sense that is first in being. Be not therefore too tender of that which corruption hath made your prison and your enemy: Many a time you have been put to resist it, and watch and strive against it; and when you have been at the best, it hath been hindering you to be better; and when the spirit was willing, the flesh was weak: And quickly hath it caused your cooling and declension. Many a blessed hours communion between God and your souls that flesh hath deprived you of. And therefore though still you must love it, yet you should the less grieve or be troubled at its sufferings, seing they are but the fruits of its sin, and a holy contendedness should possess your minds, that God should thus castigatorily revenge his own and your quarrel upon it.

10. But yet consider, that were you never so tender of the body it self, yet faith and reason should perswade you to be content; For God is but preparing even for its felicity; His

undoing it but to make it up again. As in the new birth he broke your hearts and false hopes, that he might heal your hearts, and give you sounder hopes instead of them: so at death he breaketh your flesh and worldly hopes, not to undo you, and leave it in corruption, but to raise it again another manner of body then now it is, and give it a part in the blessedness which you hoped for. If in good sadness you believe the Resurrection, what cause is there for so much fear of death? You can be content that your Roses die, and your sweetest Flowers fall and perish, and the green and beauteous complexion of the earth, be turned into a bleak and withered hue, because you expect a kind of Resurrection in the Spring. You can boldly lie down at night to sleep, though sleep be a kind of death to the body, and more to the soul; and all because you shall rise again in the morning. And if every nights sleep (or one at least) were a gentle death, if you were sure to rise again the next morning, you would make no great matter of it. Were it as common to men to die every night, and rise again in the morning, as it is to sleep every night and rise in the morning, death would not seem such a dreadful thing. Those poor men that have the falling sickness, do once in a day or in a few daies, lie as dead men, and have as much pain as many that die: And yet because they use to be up and well again in a little time, they can go merrily about their business, the rest of the day, and little fear their approaching fall. How much more should the belief of a Resurrection unto life, confirm us against the fears of death? And why should we not as quietly commit our bodies to the dust, when we have the promise of the God of heaven, that the Earth *shall deliver up her dead*, and that this body *that is sown in corruption, shall be raised in incorruption? It is sow in dishonour, it is raised in glory: it is sown in weakness, it is raised in power: it is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body*] So great and wonderful the change will be, as now is unconceivable! we have now a drossy lump of flesh, an aggregation of the Elements to a seed of life, which out of them forms it self a body, by the Divine influx. Like the Silk-worm which in the winter is but a seed, which in the Summer doth move and attract that matter

matter from which it gets a larger body, by a kind of Resurrection: But it is another manner of body (I will not say of flesh) which at the Resurrection we shall have. Not flesh and blood, nor a natural body, but of a nature so spiritual, sublime and pure, that it shall be indeed a spiritual body. And think not that this is a contradiction, and that spirituality and corporeity are inconsistent. For [*there is a Natural body and there is a Spiritual body*] The root of the fleshly Natural body was the *first man* Adam: who was *made a living soul*, to be the Root of Living souls. The Root of the spiritual Body is *Christ*, who being a *quickning Spirit*, doth quicken all his members by his Spirit; which Spirit of Grace is the seed of Glory; and as from an holy and gracious Saviour we receive an holy and gracious nature: so from a Glorified Saviour we shall receive a glorious nature: we are now *changed from Glory to Glory* in the beginning, as *by the Spirit of the Lord*: But it is another kind of Glory that this doth tend to. *Howbeit that is not first which is spiritual, but the natural; and afterwards the spiritual; The first man was of the Earth, Earthy*: The *second man is the Lord from heaven.* And from each of them we partake of an answerable Nature. *As is the Earthy, such are they that are earthy*, even all of us in our fleshly state, having earthy bodies from an earthy *Adam*, and natural bodies from the natural *Adam*. *And as is the heavenly, such are they that are heavenly*: for Christ makes men like himself, even first gracious and then glorious, as *Adam* begets us like *himself*, that is, natural (and sinful.) And therefore all those that have *followed Christ in the Regeneration*, shall follow him into Glory, and having conquered by him, shall reign by him and with him: and having received the holy nature here which is the seed of glory, they shall receive the glorious nature there which is the perfection of that Grace; And so as Christ hath an *heavenly spiritual body*, and not an earthy natural body, so shall his Members have, that they may be like him. And *as we have here born the image of the earthy, in having* first a natural, fleshly body; *we shall also bear the Image of the Heavenly* Adam, in having a spiritual body, that is not flesh. Now, lest any doubt of it (saith the Spirit of God) [*this I say, that Flesh and Blood cannot inherit the Kingdom of God; neither doth Cor-*

ruption inherit incorruption] 1 Corinth. 15.42. to 51.

Object. *If there were but as much likelihood of a Resurrection as there is of the Reviving of the plants in the Spring, I could believe it; for there is a life remaining in the Root or Seed: but the body of man hath neither Root nor seed of life, and therefore its contrary to nature that it should revive.*

Answ. 1. If it be *above* nature, that is all, it is not contrary to it; Or not so contrary as to be *above* the power of the Lord of nature. Will you allow no greater works for God then such as you can see a reason of, and can assign a natural cause of? what did nature in the creation of Nature! It was not certainly any cause, of it self! If Christ rose without a natural cause, even so shall we. 2. But why may I not say that the dead body of man hath a living Root, as truly as the plants in winter. The *soul* is the Root of the body, and the soul is still alive: And Christ is the *Root* of the soul, and he is still alive. For though we are dead, yet our *Life is hid with Christ in God: and when Christ who is our life shall appear* (at the Spring of Resurrection) then *we shall also appear with him in Glory*, Col. 3. 3, 4. And though there be no Physical contact between this living soul and the body, yet there is a Relative Union, and a deep rooted *Love* of the *soul* to its body, and *inclination* to it: so that it is mindful of it, and waiteth with longing for that hour when the command of God shall send it to revive that body; It is not incredible that a silly snail should by its natural life and power make for it self a beautful habitation. Or that the life of a Rose-tree that was buried in the root, should fabricate a sweet and beauteous Rose by which it may make an ostentation of its invisible self to the world. In how small a room doth the life of a silk-worm lie (of which I spoke before) in the winter! That little grain or seed is such as yields no sign of life to the beholder: yet doth it form it self a larger body, and that body spin its silken web out of its own substance, and in that, house it self in a husk, and take to it self another shape, and thence become a winged Fly, and so generate more. But neerer us, in the generation of man, the vital principle in the seed, doth quickly with concurrent causes form it self a body. The warmth of the body of the Hen or other

other Bird, can turn the egge into a Chicken. Why then may not the living soul, that is the Root and life of the body in the dust, be the instrument of God to *reform* its own body? as certainly it will be the principle that shall *reinform* it. But you say, the body being dead hath no natural root, nor way of recess to life again, because the privation is total. To which I answer, First the Relative union between the soul and it, and the souls disposition to the Return into its body, is as potent a cause of its reviving, as the natural union of the Root and branches: if withall you consider that Christ is the Root of the soul. Rational agents if perfect, will work as certainly as Natural. For natural causes do nothing but by a Power communicated to them from an Intellectual cause, even God himself. Why should Nature do any of these things but because God that makes and ruleth all, will have it to be so? Now Jesus Christ is the Political Head of the Church. The body in the grave hath its own Relation to him: Christ is still living, and resolved, and engaged by promise, and enclined by Love, to revive that body. And as Christ is the life of the soul, so the soul is the life of the body; and this soul, as I said, is waiting to be sent again into it. And when the hour comes, what can hinder? The Love of the soul to its body, and its desire to be reunited, is a kind of Natural cause of the Resurrection: A candle not lighted, is as far from light, and as much without it, as a dead body is without life. And yet one touch of a lighted candle will light that which never was lighted before. And so may one touch of the living soul thats now with Christ, put life into the body that lieth in the dust. And as the lighted candle makes the other like it, and communicateth of its own nature to it; so doth the glorified soul communicate a new kind of excellency to the body, which it never had before: even to be a spiritual, glorious, incorruptible, and immortal body. In the first creating of man, the new formed body as to the matter of it, was no better then the body of a Beast or any common piece of earth. But the soul made the difference; when a Rational Soul was breathed into that Body, it advanced the very body to a dignity beyond the bodies of brutes, even such as the Natural body of man had before sin. When Christ was about to re-

repair faln man, it was the ſpirit of Chriſt informing the ſoul that cauſed the Renewed ſoul to communicate again a dignity to the bodies of ſanctified men above other bodies. And ſo when the body was dead becauſe of ſin, (having the root of ſin and death within it, and being mortal therefore) yet the ſpirit was life becauſe of Righteouſneſs (being the Root of holy and Righteous diſpoſitions, and of the new life in man himſelf.) *Rom.* 8. 10. For Chriſt the principal root of life, and the ſpirit and holineſs, are firſt in order of nature in the ſoul, and but by communication and ſecondarily in the Body: But contrarily, ſin made its entrance firſt by the Body, and hath its Root and Seat, firſt in order of nature in the body; and ſo is communicated to the ſoul: Thus ſin comes in at the back-door, even at the wrong end, and by the baſer part: But Grace comes in the right way by the Nobler part; ſin hath its Root in the viler part: but Chriſt hath his ſeat firſt in the better part. And yet I muſt add 1. That ſin is not ripe till it reach the will, though it enter by the fleſh and ſenſes: it is not formed, nor to be called ſin, till it reach the will, and as there it is ſituated: but yet the thing it ſelf is firſt in and by the fleſh: 2. And the will is truly the ſeat of Original ſin it ſelf, as well as the ſenſitive part: but not the firſt Root of the corruption. Though ſin be *Worſt* in the Rational part, becauſe the corruption of the beſt is worſt, yet it is not *firſt* there. But Holineſs is *firſt* alſo in the ſoul, and ſo communicated to the body. And ſo alſo Glory it ſelf will be. And therefore take notice of the wiſe and gratious providence of God, that taketh the ſoul to heaven before hand that it may be firſt Glorified, and ſo may be fit to communicate glory to the body: And ſo as the *Natural Soul dignified* the *Natural Body*, and the *Sanctified Soul* did *Sanctifie* the body, ſo *the Glorified Soul* by *reunion* with the *body*, ſhall communicate its *Nature* to the *body* at the Reſurrection, and ſo it will be made *ſpiritual*, *immortal* and *incorruptible* by the ſoul; and ſoul and body, are made ſuch by Chriſt.

So that by this time you may ſee, that there is more *Reaſon* for the *Reſurrection* for all the body is turned to earth, then there is Reaſon that a Candle thats gone out ſhould be lighted again

again by another; or then there is *Reason* that I should put on my cloaths in the morning which I put off at night. Its true, those cloaths have no power to put on themselves; nor is there any natural necessitating cause of it: but yet there is a *Free cause* in me, that will *infallibly* (if I live and be able) produce it: For nature disposeth me to abhorr nakedness, and desire my cloaths, and therefore in the morning I will put them on. And so nature teacheth the separated soul to desire a reunion with its body; and therefore when the Resurrection morning comes, it will gladly take the word from Christ, and give that vital touch to the body that shall revive it, and so put on its ancient garment; but wonderfully changed from *fleshly* to *spiritual*, from *dishonorable* into *glorious*.

And now I hope you see, that you may put off these cloaths with patience and submission, and that it is no wrong to the flesh it self to be put off, but tendeth to its highest advancement at the last: Though the first cause of sin, and the nest of sin shall be so broken first, that it shall first be seen what *sin hath* done, before it be seen what *Grace will* do; and the fruit of our *own* wayes must first be tasted, before we shall fully feed and live upon the blessed fruit of the grace of Christ.

11. Moreover, as there is a Resurrection for the body it self, and that to a more perfect estate then it can here attain, so the *whole nature* shall be perfected beyond our present comprehension. *This* life was not intended to be the place of our perfection, but the preparation for it. As the fruit is far from ripeness in the first appearance, or the flower while it is but in the husk or bud; or the Oak when it is but an acorn; or any plant when it is but in the seed; no more is the very Nature of man on earth: As the Infant is not perfect in the Womb, nor the Chicken in the shell, no more are our Natures perfect in this world. Me thinks for the sake of the body it self, much more of the soul, if we are believers, we should submit contentedly to death. While you are here you know that creatures will fail you, enemies will hate you, friends will grieve you, neighbours will wrong you, Satan will tempt you and molest you; the world is changeable and will deceive you; all your comforts are mixed with discomforts; the body carrieth about

with it calamities enough of its own to weary it: What daily pains must it be at for the sustentation of it self in its present state; and yet what grief and sorrow must it undergo? Every member hath either its disease, or a disposition thereto: What abundance of passages can pain and sickness find to enter at; and how many rooms that are ready to receive them! As every member hath its use, so every one is capable of sorrow; and the sorrow of one is at least as much communicated to the whole, as the usefulness is: The pain of the simplest member, even of a tooth can make the whole body aweary of it self. What is the daily condition of our flesh, but weakness and suffering with care and labour to prevent much worse, which yet we know cannot long be avoided: The sorrow of many a mans life hath made him wish he had never been born: and why then should he not wish as much to die, which doth ten thousand fold more for him if he be a Christian, then to be unborn would have done. Not a Relation so comfortable but hath its discomforts: Not a friend so suitable, but hath some discordancy: Nor any so amiable and sweet, but hath somewhat loathsome, troublesome and bitter. Not a place so pleasant and commodious, but hath its unfitness and discommodities: Not a society so good and regular, but hath its corruptions and irregularities. And should we be so loth to leave (whether naturally or violently) such a life as this? When the fruit is ripe, should it not be gathered? When the corn is ripe, would you have it grow there & not be cut? When the spirit hath hatched us for heaven, should we be so loth to leave the shell or nest? When we are begotten again to the hopes of immortality, should we be so desirous to stay in the womb? O Sirs, it is another kind of life that we shall have with God? They are purer comforts, that stay for us above! But if you will not have the grapes to be gathered and prest, how can you expect to have the wine? Me thinks our flesh should have enough ere this time of sickness, and pain, & want, and crosses, and should be content to lie down in hope of the day when these shall be no more.

Little would an unbeliever think what a Body God will make of this, that now is corruptible flesh and blood! It shall then

then be loathsome and troublesome no more. It shall be hungry, or thirsty, or weary, or cold, or pained no more. As the stars of heaven do differ from a clod of earth, or from a carrion in a ditch, so will our glorified immortal bodies differ from this mortal corruptible flesh. If a skilfull workman can turn a little earth and ashes into such curious transparent glasses, as we daily see: and if a little seed that bears no shew of such a thing, can produce the more beautifull flowers of the earth; and if a little acorn can bring forth the greatest Oak; why should we once doubt whether the seed of everlasting life and glory which is now in the blessed souls with Christ, can by him communicate a perfection to the flesh that is dissolved into its elements? There's no true beauty but that which is there received from the face of God: And if a glympse made *Moses* face to shine; what glory will Gods glory communicate to us, when we have the fullest endless intuition of it? *There* only is the strength, and *there's* the riches, and *there's* the honour, and *there's* the pleasure; and here are but the shadows, and dreams, and names, and images of these pretious things.

And the perfection of the soul thats now imperfect, will be such as cannot now be known. The very nature and manner of Intellection, Memory, Volition and Affections, will be unconceivably altered and elevated, even as the soul it self will be, and much more, because of the change on the corruptible body, which in these acts it now makes use of. But of these things I have spoke so much in the *Saints Rest*, that I shall say no more of them now, but this; that in a Believer that expects this blessed change, and knows that he shall never till then be perfect, there is much unreasonableness in the inordinate unwillingness and fears of death.

12. You know that fears and unwillingness can do no good, but much increase your suffering, and make your death a double death. If it be bitter naturally, make it not more bitter wilfully. I speak this of a violent death for Christ as well as of a natural death; For as the one cannot be avoided if we would, so the other cannot be avoided when Christ calleth us to it, without the loss of our Salvation: and therefore it may be called Necessary as

well as the other. Necessary suffering and death is enough without the addition of unnecessary fears.

13. Nay were it but to put an end to the inordinate fears of death, even death it self should be the less fearful to us. These very fears are troublesome to many an upright soul: and should we not desire to be past them! As a woman with Child is in fear of the pain and danger of her travail; but joyfull when its over; so is the true believer himself too oft afraid of the departing hour: but death puts an end to all those fears. Is it the pain that you fear? Why how soon will it be over? Is it the strangeness of your souls to God, and the place that you are passing to? This also will be quickly over; and one moment will give you such full acquaintance with the blessed God, and the Celestial inhabitants, and the world in which you are to live, that you will find your self no stranger there; but be more joyfully familiar and content then ever you were in the bosome of your dearest friend. The Infant in the Womb is a stranger to this lighter open world and all the inhabitants of it; and yet it is not best stay there. You can sail for commodity to a Countrey that you never saw: and why cannot you pass with peace and joy to a God, a Christ, a Heaven that you never saw? But yet you are not wholly a stranger there; Is it not that God that you have loved, and that hath first loved you? Have you not been brought into the world by him, and lived by him, and been preserved and provided for by him? and do you not know him? Is it not your Father, and he that hath given you his Son and his Spirit? have you not found an inclination towards him, desires after him, and some taste of his love, and communion with him, and yet are you wholly unacquainted with him? Know you not him whom you have loved above all? in whom you have trusted? and whom you have daily served in the world? Who have you lived to but him? for whom else have you laid out your time and labour? and yet do you not know him? And know you not that Christ that hath purposely come down into flesh that you might know him? and that hath shewed himself to you in a holy life, and bitter death, and in abundant pretious Gospel mercies, and in Sacramental representations, that so he might enter-

entertain a familiarity with you, and infinite distance might not leave you too strange to God? Know you not that Spirit that hath made so many a motion to your soul? that hath sanctified you, and formed the image of God upon you, and hath dwelt in you so long? and made your hearts his very work-house, where he hath been daily doing somewhat for God? It is not possible that you should be utterly strange to him that you *Live to*, and *Live from*, and *Live in*; and not know him, by whom you know your selves and all things, nor see that Light by which you see whatever you see.

O but, you say, *you never saw him, and have no distinct apprehension of his essence. Answ.* What! Would you make a Creature of him, that can be limited, comprehended or seen with fleshly mortal eyes? Take heed of such imaginations. It is the understanding that must see him: You know that he is most Wise, and Good, and Great; and that he is the Creator, and Sustainer, and Ruler of the world, and that he is your Reconciled Father in Christ; and is this no knowledge of him? And then, the Heaven that you are to go to, is it that you are an Heir of, where you have laid up your treasure, and where your hearts and conversation hath so long been, and yet do you not know it? You have had many a thought of it, and bestowed many a dayes labour for it, and yet do you not know it? *O but you never saw it for all this? Answ.* It is a spiritual blessedness that flesh and blood can neither enjoy nor see: But by the eye of the mind you have often seen, at least some glimpse of it; You know that it is The present intuition and full fruition of God himself and your glorified Redeemer with his blessed Angels and Saints in perfect Love and Joy and Praise. And if you know this, you are not altogether strangers to heaven. And for the Saints and heavenly Inhabitants, you are not wholly strangers to them. Some of them you have known in the flesh, and others of them you have known in the spirit: You *are fellow-Citizens with the Saints, and of the houshold of God*, and therefore cannot be *utterly* unacquainted with them.

But me thinks the stranger you are to God and to Heaven, and to the Saints, the more you should desire to be there

where there is no strangeness; This is not the time or place of most intimate acquaintance. If you would be acquainted, you should draw neerer and not draw back. Its death that must open you the door into that presence where strangeness will be no more.

And if it be the doubts of your interest in Christ and life that makes you shrink and loth to die: Consider, that to refuse to die for Christ, is the way above all to increase those doubts; but to give up your lives for him, or cheerfully to surrender your souls to him at his call, is the readiest surest way in the world to prove you at present in a state of grace; besides that you will be hastened into a state of glory, where you shall be quickly and fully past all doubts of your state of former grace. In a word, as all the fears and sorrows of this life will then be at end, so with the rest will our fears of death: And therefore death should be the more welcome, because it is the end, as of all other troubles, so of these disturbing fears.

14. Consider also what a multitude have trod this bloody way before you. Almost all that ever were born have died, and are now in the world that you are passing to. You are not the first that entred at this narrow gate. The deareſt Saints of God have died. If *Abraham*, *Moses*, *Joshua*, *David*, *Peter* and *Paul* could not escape the stroak of death, what are you that you should murmur to follow such and so many that have gone before you? You need not fear being solitary in heaven. There are millions and millions more of Saints, then there are on earth: Many that you knew; and millions more that will then be as dear to you as if you had known them. Is it not better be among innocent souls, then a defiled guilty world? Is it not better be where no sin entereth, and never a lust or passion comes, then to live as among Wild beasts, with furious unreasonable sinners? Is it not better be where Light is perfect, and all your doubts are fully resolved, then in darkness and perplexity, and among an ignorant blind generation, that are enemies to the light which you desire! Is it not better be where is nothing but the perfect love of the Infinite God, in perfect Saints and blessed Angels, then to live among perverse ungodly

ungodly men that make you almost weary of your lives? If it be a delight to us to read the writings of the illuminated Saints of God, and we think them such Jewels and Ornaments in our Libraries; what a pleasure would it be to converse with them that wrote these Books, and that in their celestial perfection, where they have attained a thousand times more light then before they had; and where all the doubts are resolved which their books could not resolve. O blessed society, in comparison of that we now converse with!

15. Nay more, lest the bloody way of death should seem too strange and terrible to us, the Lord Jesus our Head hath trod that path; and that of purpose to conquer death, by taking away the sting and principal cause of terrors, and making that a passage to felicity, that was a passage to everlasting misery. So that ever since Christ hath gone this way, there is no such danger in it to his followers. Where the Captain of our salvation goeth, his Souldiers may boldly follow him. [*Forasmuch as the children were partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part with them, that he might destroy by death him that had the power of death, that is the Devil; and might deliver them that through fear of death, were all their life time subject to bondage*] *Heb.* 2. 14, 15. He hath cleared our way, and taken out of it the sorest thorns, and hath prepared us an habitation with himself. And shall we fear to go the way that Christ hath gone, and purposely gone to clear it for us?

16. Moreover Consider, that the Celestial inhabiants have purposely made themselves familiar with us in this lower world, that they might acquaint us with themselves, and lead us up to their blessed habitation, and fit us for it; No man of common reason can doubt, but that those more capacious glorious parts of the Universe, are stored with inhabitants answerable to their glory; when we see every corner of the lower world to be repleniſhed with inhabitants. And Scripture and some experience tells us, that those Angels of God are conversant here about us men: They bear us up in their hands, that we dash not our foot against a stone, they pitch their tents and encamp about us, as an appointed guard for

for our security: It is their very office: *for what are they but ministring spirits, sent forth to minister for them that shall be heirs of salvation?* Heb. 1.14. They converse with us, though we see them not, and are about us night and day; They are among us in our holy assemblies, observing our behaviour before the Lord, 1 *Cor.* 11.10. and they are witnesses of our good and evil, *Eccles.* 5.6. From them, as the servants of God, was the Law received, *Acts* 7.53. *Gal.* 3.19. *Heb.* 2.2. They read our books, and study with us the Mysteries of the Gospel, 1 *Pet.* 1.12. And as neer as they are to God, they are glad to make the Church their book in which to read his manifold wisdom, and know it by beholding it in us as in a glass, *Ephes.* 3.10. The Nations have their Angels: The Churches have their Angels; and the particular Saints also have their Angels; *Dan.* 10.13, 20, 21. *Rev.* 1.20. *Acts* 12.15. *Mat.* 18.10. They are not strangers with us, but have *charge of us to keep us in all our wayes*, Psal. 91.10, 11, 12. They *rejoice in our conversion*, Luke 15.10. They are part of the heavenly Society that we are already listed in, *Heb.* 12.22. They ascend and descend as ordinary passengers between heaven and earth, *Gen.* 28.12. They are round about us, and we live as in their Camp, *Psal.* 34.7. Before them we must be confessed or denied, *Luke* 12.8, 9. They convoy our departed souls to Christ, *Luke* 16.22. They shall attend Christ at his second coming, as they proclaimed his first, and attended him on earth, *Matth.* 25.31. *Mar.* 8.38. They shall be his Heralds to call up the dead to judgement, *Mat.* 13.39, 49. & 24.31. And at last we shall be their companions and equal to them, *Luke* 20.36. So that you see we have the same Society invisible, which we shall have in heaven: Yea and sometime when God is pleased, they manifest their presence by visible or audible apparitions. And shall we fear to remove into the presence of these blessed spirits that now attend us, and are still about us, and the instruments of so much of our good?

Yea the Lord Jesus Christ came down to be familiar with us, and to bring us into a state of friendship, and holy boldness with God himself: And yet shall we draw back?

17.I

17. I would put this queſtion to you for your ſerious anſwer, Can you be contented, yea do you deſire, to have no more of God then here you have? Is this much of the knowledge of him, and his will and works ſufficient for you? Would you be no neerer him, and enjoy no more of him? What ever your fleſh ſay, ſure the love of God in your hearts will not ſuffer you conſiderately to ſay ſo. Conſult with your new nature, With the holy principle that is in you; Me thinks you ſhould not be content to remain for ever at ſuch a diſtance from God as you are? If you can, I blame you not to be afraid of death. If not; Why then are you loth to go to him?

18. And I would ask you alſo, Whether you are content with the meaſure of ſanctification which you have, or which is to be attained in this life? Are you contenr to live for ever with no more knowledge or love of God? No more faith or love to Chriſt? No more ſenſe of the worth of Grace? No more righteouſneſs or peace or joy in the Holy Ghoſt? No more meekneſs, humility, or heavenly mindedneſs? Are you contented rather to live for ever under all the pride and ignorance and paſſion, and ſelfiſhneſs and luſt and worldlineſs, and all other ſins that here beſet you, rather then to remove to the place of perfection, and yield that death ſhall break the Veſſel and neſt of your corruptions? If you care ſo little for the grace of God, and ſee ſo little beauty in his image, and ſee ſo little odiouſneſs in ſin, that you had rather keep it for ever, then go to God by the paſſage of death, I blame you not to be affraid to die: But if otherwiſe; Why do you deſire perfection and deliverance, and yet be ſo loth to come and receive it? When you know that it is not to be had on earth.

19. Moreover, are you contented to remain for ever as unſerviceable to God as here you are? Alas how little do you for him: how much do you to diſpleaſe him? lay together all the ſervice of your lives, and how ſmall and poor a matter is it? And would you ſtill live at theſe rates? Will this content you? Me thinks it ſhould not if you have grace in your hearts. Why then do you not deſire to depart and to be with Chriſt? There you ſhall be perfectly fitted for his ſervice, and there-

fore perfectly perform it. What other service God will have for us, we cannot yet tell; but Love and Praise we are sure will be the chief, and the rest will be good and holy and honourable, what ever it be. If you are Christians, me thinks the sense of your unprofitableness and of your unpleasing frame of heart and life, should be your daily grief! and therefore you should desire the state where you may be more serviceable, and not be so unwilling of it.

20. Lastly, I would ask you, Are you contented to attain no other end of all your life and labours and sufferings then here you do attain? What is it that you pray for, and seek and strive for? is it for no more then is to be had on earth? If you have no higher design, intentions or desires, I cannot much blame you to be loth to die. But if you have, me thinks no man should be unwilling to attain his end. What have you done and suffered so much for heaven, and now would you not go to it? Had you rather all your labour were lost? Do you desire to be happy, or do you not? If you do, (as certainly you do) would you not go where happiness is to be had, when you are sure that it is not to be had on earth? What say you! is there not plain reason in all this that I propound to you? It is a sad case, when men seek not God and Heaven as their felicity, but only as a lesser evil then hell, which they would *endure*, rather then *enjoy*, when they can keep no longer this earthly life which they account their felicity; where this is the case, its a sad case. And were not this a common case, there would not be so much unwillingness to depart.

And now Christian Reader, I beseech thee weigh these foregoing Considerations, and judge whether it be not a contradiction to thy profession, and unseemly for a believer to be unwilling to die when God shall call him: Much more to cast away everlasting life, for the saving of his temporal life but a little longer! O learn the needfull lesson of self-denial, especially in this point of denying your lives! He that can do this, can do all; and may be sure that he is mortified indeed: And he that can do all the rest, and sticks but at this, and could part with any thing for Christ save his life, doth indeed do nothing,

nor

nor is it esteemed *self-denying*. It is a lesson therefore that is exceeding necessary to be learnt, and worthy all your time and diligence, even to deny your *Lives* for the love of Christ.

Perhaps you will say, *We live in dayes of peace and liberty, and therefore are not like to be called to Martyrdom? What need then have we to learn this lesson?* I answer, 1. You are uncertain what changes you may see: but if you never suffer, yet you must be sure that you have a *heart* that *would* suffer if God did call you to it: For though you may be saved without suffering, where you are not called to it, yet you cannot be saved without a heart that would suffer if you were put upon it. 2. And if you cannot deny your *lives* for Christ, you will not *sincerely* deny your pleasures, or profits or honours for him. If you would not suffer death for him if he called you to it, you will not *sincerely* suffer losses and wrongs and reproaches for him, which almost every Christian must expect. So that to try your own sincerity, you should look after it. 3. And it is certain that death will shortly come; and then if you have not learnt this lesson, to deny your selves even in case of life, you will die unwillingly and uncomfortably.

At least me thinks, I might reason thus with any man of you, good or bad. Either death is indeed terrible, or not. If it be not, why do you so fear it when it comes! If it be, why do you not as well fear it before it comes, even in your youth and health? For you are sure then that you must die, as if it were upon you. A wonderfull thing it is, that mans heart should be so unreasonably insensible; and that there should be so great a difference in the affections of most in regard of death. Its no matter of doubt or controversie whether they shall die. He is a block and not a man, that knoweth it not as certainly now, as he shall do in his sickness. And yet, in health these wretches will not be awakened so much to fear it, as may restrain them from sin, and help them to prepare for it. Its troublesome precise talk with them, to talk of making ready to die: Either they slight it, or love not to hear or think of it. And yet the same men when death is coming, and they see they must away, are even amazed with fear and

horrour: And I canot blame them unless they were in a better case. But this I must blame them for, as most unreasonable, that they can make such a lamentable complaint when death and Hell are neer hand, and yet make so light of it all their life time.

Chap. XXXIX.

Answer to their doubts that fear death.

But because this is the hardest part of self-denial, and yet most necessary, and the particular subject of my Text, I shall stay upon it yet so much longer as to resolve a question of some doubting Christians, and to give you some Directions for the furtherance of self-denial herein.

Object. *If it be a necessary part of self-denial to deny our own lives; I am much afraid that I am no Disciple of Christ, as having no true self-denial? For I find that for all these Reasons I cannot be willing to die, but when you have said all that can be said, death is the most terrible thing in the world to me. Answ.* I pray you lay together these following particulars for answer to this great and common doubt. 1. Death as death is naturally dreadfull to all, and the best men as men are naturally averse to it and abhor it. No man can desire death as death, nor ought to do it. If it had not been an evil to nature, it had not been fit to be the matter of Gods punishment, and to be Threatned to the world. Threatnings would not do their work if that which is threatned were not naturally evil, or hurtful and dreadfull to the subject. To Threaten men with a benefit is a contradiction, as much as to promise him a mischief, and more. 2. It is not therefore a simple Displacency or Averseness to die, that God requireth you to lay by. Self-denial consisteth not in reconciling us to Death as death; For then he might as well perswade us to become Angels, as to deny our selves, and Preachers had as hard a work to do as to perswade men to cease to be men. Death will be an enemy as long as it is death. Even the separated soul hath so natural an inclination

nation to union with its Body, that the separation is part of the penalty to it: And though heaven be their joy, and Christ their life and fulness, yet the separation from the body which they have even with Christ is a penalty; and they have not that perfect measure of Joy and Glory as they shall have when they are joined to the body again. So that separation as such is penal to the soul in blessedness. And even the separated soul of Jesus Christ that was more blessed then ours, was as separated, in a state of penalty, when his body was in the grave (Of which see my Appendix to the Reformed Pastor, about the Descent into Hell.) 3. That which you have to look after therefore in your souls, is not a love to death, or willingness of death as death, which no man hath or should have; but it is, 1. A *Submission* to it as a *less evil* then sin and Hell and the Displeasure of God: And a choosing *rather* to die then wilfully to sin and forsake the Lord. 2. And a Love to that glory in the fruition of God, which death is the passage to. Seeing we cannot obtain the end of our faith and patience by any easier passage then death, you must rather be content to go this strait and grievous way, then miss of the state of eternal blessedness: Let death be never so odious and dreadfull to you, if you had but rather die then forsake Christ by sin, or miss of everlasting life with God, you have that true self-denial, even of life it self, which is required in my Text. 4. And yet even a gracious soul may be so much unprepared as to desire to stay yet longer on earth, though he be absent from the Lord while he is present in the body; that so a better preparation may be made: And also the love of God may make a man desire to stay yet longer for the service of the Church, or *to be* with *Paul in a strait between two*, Phil. 1. 21, 22, 23. 5. Have you not such pleasant apprehensions of the *New Jerusalem*, and the coming of Christ in glory, and the blessed state of the Saints in heaven, as that you could most gladly enter into that blessed state by any other way then death: And had you not rather die, then miss of that felicity. At least, when you know that die you must, had you not rather die sooner, even a violent death by persecution, then miss of your eternal life, by saving your lives a little longer? 6. And

for your unwillingneſs to die, as death is the *laſt* enemy to be conquered by Chriſt, at the Reſurrection, ſo the *fears* of death and the *power* of it, is the laſt evil that we ſhall be troubled with; and you muſt not expect to be fully freed from theſe fears, in this life: for death will be death, and man will be man. But yet let me tell you that before you die, God may very much abate your fears; and very ordinarily doth ſo with his ſervants; 1. By giving them that grace that is ſuited to a dying ſtate; and 2. By the help of ſickneſs and pain itſelf: And that is one great reaſon why ſickneſs ſhall uſually go before death, that pain and miſery may make the fleſh even a weary of it ſelf, and make the ſoul a weary of its companion, and both a weary of this miſerable life.

And now I ſhall briefly name ſome few Directions which if you will practiſe, you will more eaſily ſubmit to death.

Chap. XL.

Directions to be willing to die.

Direct. 1. BY all means endeavour the ſtrengthening of your Belief of the Reality of eternal life, and the truth of the promiſe of Chriſt concerning it. For if you Believe it not, you cannot die for it; nor cheerfully ſubmit to a natural death, through the hopes of it. This is the ſum or principal work of the Chriſtian faith, *to Believe the everlaſting life as procured for us by the love of the Father, the Obedience, Death, Reſurrection and Interceſſion of the Son, and the Sanctification of the Holy Ghoſt.* It is the unſoundneſs or the weakneſs of this Belief, that is the principal cauſe of our unwillingneſs to die.

Direct. 2. By all means endeavour to get and maintain the Aſſurance of your Title to this Promiſe and Felicity. Get ſound evidence, and keep it clear: Expunge all blots without delay. Take heed of ſuch ſin as woundeth Conſcience, and waſteth comfort, and grieveth the ſpirit of Adoption by which you

you are sealed to the day of redemption, and by which you have your peace and comforts. If by such sin your souls are clouded and estranged from God; be diligent in seeking for healing and reconciliation; and rest not till your peace be made with God. For while you think of him as displeased, you will be afraid of coming to him, and this will double the fears of Death.

Direct. 3. Deny your selves first in the carnal and worldly comforts of this life, or else you are unlikely to deny your selves in the matter of Life it self. Disuse your selves from unnecessary pleasures of the flesh: And learn to endure dishonour, contempt and reproach from the world, and sickness and poverty when its inflicted on you by the hand of God. Till you can deny your ease, and profit, and appetite, and honour, and all the delight of of this present world, you are nevet likely to deny your Lives sincerly. To deny your lives doth contain the denying of all these and more; and therefore you must learn the lesser, if you would do the greater. These are the *parts* of life as it were; and its easier thus to overcome it in its *parts* then in the whole; when particular Souldiers are destroyed, the Army is the weaker.

And the *use* of suffering the *Afflictions* of this life, will make you hardy, and make death seem a smaller matter. For when you thus *Die Daily*, you will the more easily *die once.*

Besides, Death is *half disarmed* when the Pleasures and Interests of the flesh are first denied. For the leaving of fleshly contents and pleasures, is much of the reason of mens unwillingness to die. And therefore when these are denied before hand, the *Reasons* of your unwillingness are taken away. If you pull down the Nest, the Birds will be gone. Men that are loth to leave their Countrey, would willingly be gone, if their houses were fired, or they were turned out of doors, and their friends and goods were all sent away. This is it that makes men so unwilling to die, because they practise not Mortification in their health, but contrarily study to live as pleasingly as may be to the flesh, and think it part of their Christian Liberty, thus making Christ a carnal Saviour as the Jews conceive:

ceive of their expected Messiah; and taking up with a carnal false salvation, not purchased by Christ, but given by Satan in the name of Christ, and assumed by themselves. They make it their business to have buildings, and lands, and meats, and drinks, and honours, and all things as pleasing as may be to the flesh, and then they *complain* that *they are unwilling to die*: and I easily believe them: it is no wonder! They make it the work of their lives to feather their nests, and make Provision for the flesh; and then complain, that they are loth to leave those nests that they have been feathering so long, and loth to scatter all the heap and treasure which they have been gathering. And did you think that gathering it was the way to make you willing to leave it? Men load themselves with the lumber and baggage of the world, and then complain that they cannot travail on their journey, but had rather sit down. They fall a building them habitations in their way, when they should have none but Inns or Tents; and when they have bestowed all their time, and cost, and charges on them, they complain of their hearts for being loth to leave them. Such mad doings as these are not the way to be willing to die: To provide for *self* and *flesh* in your Life-time, is not the way to *Deny* your Lives. Sirs, the way is this, if you will learn it, and stick not at the cost and trouble: *Self* must be here stript naked of all its carnal comforts, so that it shall have nothing left to fly to or trust upon, nor nothing left that it can take delight in, and then it will away. If you would drive out an ill Tenant, you will cast out all their goods, and leave them nothing but the bare walls, and not so much as a bed to lie on, and uncover the house over their heads, and then they will be gone. So if you cast out all your sensual commodities and delights, that when the flesh looks about, it shall see nothing but the bare walls, and cannot find a resting place, then death will be less grievous and less unwelcome. Or rather indeed even the *flesh* and *self* must be mortified; and in the sense in which it must be denied, it must have no being or life, (that is, as it is withdrawn from its subordination to God) And then there will be nothing to rise up against your submission to Death. Though nature as nature will keep you from *Loving* death

death as death, yet were but self-denial perfect, there would be nothing to keep you from *submitting* to it, and desiring to pass through it to immortality. O that you would but try such a self-denying life, and you would certainly die an easie, comfortable death.

Direct. 4. Suffer not unworthy thoughts of God to abide in yout soul. Think not of his Infinite Love and Goodness with doubtfulness or diminution. You will never be willing to come to God, while you think of him as cruel, or as a despiser of his creatures, or unwilling to do Good. But when once you think of him as the surest greatest Good, and your fastest friend, and the most lovely object that can be conceived of, and these thoughts are deep and wrought into the very nature of your soul, then you will be ready more chearfully to die. No man can love the presence of a tyrant or an enemy, or of him that is so far above him, that there is no communion with him to be had. If you entertain such blasphemous thoughts of God, you are unlikely ever to desire his presence. See you think as honourably and magnificently of the Goodness and Love of God, as you do of his Knoweldge or his Power; and as you would abhorr any extenuating conceptions of the one, so do of the other; And then the lovelineſs and glory of his face, will draw out your desires and make you long to be with God.

Direct. 5. And by such means as this aforesaid, Labour to bring up your souls to live in the Love of God. It is love that is the Divine and heavenly nature in us: and therefore must needs incline us heaven-wards. The nature of love is to long after communion with him that we love. The more Love, the more of God in the soul, and the more desire after God. This is the grace that must live for ever, and therefore bendeth towards the place of its perfection. Its want of Love to God, that maketh most us so contented to be from him. Strengthen and exercise all other graces, as far as in you lieth: but above all live in the exercise of this *enjoying*, *heavenly* grace.

Direct. 6. Consider of all the burdens that are here upon you, which should make you long to be with God. One would think the feeling of them should force you to consideration

ration and wearineſs of them, and make the thoughts of reſt to be ſweet to you. Have you yet not ſin enough, and ſorrow, and fear, and trouble enough? Or muſt God lay a greater load on you, to make you deſire to be diſburdened? Every hour you ſpend, and every creature you have to do with, afford you ſome occaſion of renewing your deſires to depart from theſe and be with Chriſt.

Direct. 7. Obſerve and magnifie that of God which is here revealed to you in his word and works. Study him and admire him in Scripture, ſtudy and admire him in the frame of nature; And when you look towards Sun, or Moon, or ſea, or land, and perceive how little it is that you know, and how deſirable it is to know them perfectly, think then of that ſtate, where you ſhall know them all, in God himſelf who is more then all. Study and admire him in the courſe of Providences: ſtudy and admire him in the perſon of Chriſt, in the frame of his holy life; in the work of Redemption; in the holy frame of his Laws and Covenants; ſtudy and admire him in his Saints, and the frame of his holy Image on their ſouls. This life of ſtudying and admiring God, and dwelling upon him with all our ſouls, will exceedingly diſpoſe us to be willing to come to him, and to ſubmit to death.

Direct. 8. Live alſo in the daily exerciſe of holy Joy and Praiſe to God; which is the heavenly imployment. For if you uſe your ſelves to this heavenly life, it will much incline you to deſire to be there. Exerciſe fear, and godly ſorrow, and care in their places: but ſpecially after Faith and Love, be ſure to live in holy Joy & Praiſe. Be much in the conſideration of all that Riches of grace in Chriſt, communicated & to be commmunicated to you. And be much in Thanks to God for his mercies; and cheering and comforting your ſoul, in the Lord your God: And thus the Joy of Grace will much diſpoſe you to the Joys of Glory; and the Peace which the Kingdom of God conſiſteth in, will incline you to the Peace of the Everlaſting Kingdom: and the cheerful Praiſing of God on Earth, in Pſalms or other ways of Praiſe, will prepare and diſpoſe you to the heavenly Praiſes. And therefore Chriſtians exceedingly wrong their ſouls, and hinder themſelves from a willingneſs to be with God, in ſpending

ing all their daies in drooping, or doubting, or worldly dulneſs, and laying by ſo much the Joy of the Saints, and the Praiſes of God.

Direct. 9. Dwell on the believing fore-thoughts of the everlaſting glory which you muſt poſſeſs. Think what it is that others are enjoying while you are here; and what you muſt *be*, and *poſſeſs*, and *do* for ever. Daily think of the Certainty, Perfection and Perpetuity of your Bleſſedneſs. What a life it will be, to ſee the bleſſed God in his Glory, and taſte of the fulneſs of his love, and to ſee the glorified Son of God, and with a perfected ſoul and body to be perfectly taken up in the Love, and Joy, and Praiſes of the Lord, among all his holy Saints and Angels, in the heavenly *Jeruſalem*. You muſt by the exerciſe of Faith and Love, in holy Meditation and Prayer even dwell in the Spirit, and converſe in Heaven, while your bodies are on earth, if you would entertain the news of death as beſeems a Chriſtian. But of this at large elſewhere.

Direct. 10. Laſtly, if you would be willing to ſubmit to death, reſign up your own underſtandings and wils to the wiſdom and the will of God; and Know not good and evil for your carnal ſelves: but wholly truſt your lives and ſouls to the Wiſdom and Love of your deareſt Lord. Muſt you be carking and caring for your ſelves, when you have an Infinite God engaged to care for you. *O* ſaith *ſelf*, *I am not able to bear the terrors and pangs of death. O* ſaith Faith, *My Lord is eaſily able to ſupport me, and it is his undertaken work to do it: My work is but to Pleaſe him; and its his work to take care of me in life and death; and therefore though I walk through the valley of the ſhaddow of death, yet will I fear no evil. O* ſaith *Self*, *I am utterly a ſtranger to another world! I know not what I ſhall ſee, nor what I ſhall be, nor whither I ſhall go the next minute after death: None come from the dead to ſatisfie us of theſe things!* *O* but ſaith Faith, My bleſſed Father and Redeemer is not a ſtranger to the place that I muſt go to! He knows it, though I do not! He knows what I ſhall be and do, and whither I ſhall go; and all is in his power: And ſeeing it belongs not to me but to him to diſpoſe of me, and give me the promiſed reward, it is meet that I reſt in *his* underſtanding; And it is better for me, that his

Infinite Wisdom dispose of my departing soul, then my shallow insufficient knowledge. I may much more acquiesce in his knowledge then my own. *O* but saith *self*, *I fear it may prove a change of darkness and confusion to my soul! what will become of me, I cannot tell.* O but saith Faith, I am sure I am in the hands of Love! and such Love as is Omnipotent and engaged for my good! and how can it then go ill with me! If I had my own will, I should not fear: And how much less should I fear when I am at the will of God, even of most Wise, Almighty Love.

There is no true Centre for the soul to Rest in but the Will of God. It is our business to Obey and Please his Will, as dutiful children; and to commit our selves contentedly to his Will for the absolute disposal of us. It is not possible that the Will of an Heavenly Father should be against his Children, whose desire and sincere endeavour hath been to Obey and Please his Will. And therefore learn this as your great and necessary lesson, with Joyful Confidence to Commit your selves, and your departing souls to your Fathers Will, as knowing that your Death is but the execution of that Will, which is engaged to cause all things to work together for your good, *Rom.* 8.28. And say with *Paul*, *I suffer, but am not ashamed* [*for I know whom I have believed, and I am perswaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed to him against that day*, 2 Tim. 1.12. & 1 Tm.4.10. [*Therefore we labour and suffer — because we trust in the living God, who is the Saviour of all men, specially of those that believe*] say therefore as *Job*, [*Though he kill me, yet will I trust in him*] Or rather as Christ, [*Father, into thy hands I commend my Spirit*] Luke.23.46. If the hands and Will of the Father was the Rock and comfort of Christ in his suffering and death, so also it must be to us. See therefore that in your health you Kill your own wils, that when Death comes, *self* may have no will to strive against the Will of God; but as your Heaven it self will be your *Rest in the Will of God*; so Rest in it in death, that you may have a taste of Heaven in Death, and sure that will sweeten it, if any thing will.

II. I Have hitherto shewed you wherein *self-denial* doth consist, first as to the heart and root of it, which is the Mortification of the *selfish* Inclination or Disposition: and then, as to the first of the three parts of its Objective Interest, which is *sensitive Pleasure*: I should now proceed to the other two parts of its objective Interest: And the second is, *Worldly Gain or Profit*, which the Apostle *John* calleth [the Lust of the Eyes] and puts next to the [Lust of the Flesh.] But I have already written a Treatise of this by it self, *viz.* Of our Crucifixion of the World; and therefore I may well forbear it here.

Chap. XLI.

Honour and Pride, And 1. *Climbing high*, &c.

III. THE third part of the Objective Interest of Self, is that which goes commonly under the name of *Honour*; and is called by the Apostle, [Pride of Life] and put by him in the third place. And of this I intend, if God will give me time and strength, to write also a Treatise by it self, and therefore should say nothing of it here; but only lest I should not have time to do that which I desire, I shall briefly name you ten of the Particulars under this head of *Honour*, which you must deny: that is, Ten wayes wherein men exercise their Pride.

see the Author's Christian Directory. Chap. 4. part 5. pag. (1st edit.) 229—253. And somewhat in the preface to this Book.

1. One work of Pride is *to climb higher into places of superiority and honour and command*. Poor men that are out of hope, and in no capacity for rising, feel not much of this, though the Disposition to it be in them as well as others, because it is not drawn forth by by temptations. But where opportunity serveth, there is nothing wherein *selfishness* and *Pride* doth more constantly and obstinately shew it self then in this. It is the Nature of *selfishness* to aspire after the highest exaltation in the world that can be attained. We may easily observe in

in Kingdoms and Corporations, and all Societies of men, what Christ observed at their feasts, that [they choose out the chief rooms, and sit with the highest] *Luke* 14. 7, 8. What eager desires have they to be *above* other men? If any office or seat of Honour be void, there is few that apprehend any possibility of attaining it, that want a will to it; Yea few that will not seek and strive for it, and envy those that carry it before them, and hate, or bear a grudge to those that were against their rising: yea few but venture on the most unlawful means to accomplish their desires, and yet will scarce believe that they are unlawful, because they think them necessary to their ends. There is few, if they had the choice of a man to any vacant place of honour, that would chuse any other but themselves; unless their unfitness were likely more to dishonour them, or some way to make their honours too burdensom to them. No man in their eyes is so fit as themselves, or so worthy as themselves: Or if it be their Children or Kinsmen that stand for it, or any that *self* hath special interest in, they seem the worthiest for the place, because they are related to *them*. Especially if it be any eminent Dignity or Command, that seems to them a prey thats worth the hunting after. O the blinding, bewitching, befooling power of *Pride* and *selfishness*! How commonly doth it rule! How few are those holy, happy men, that have escaped and overcome it! How few Societies be there in the world, whether Corporations, Colledges, or the like, but Pride and Selfishness makes their Governors? How few Nations on the Earth, where *Pride* and *Selfishness* maketh not their Kings or Soveraigns? And is any to wonder if they be all ill-governed then, where the Devil doth so much to choose the Governors? I know that God over-ruleth all, and restraineth the lusts of men, and crosseth their designs; but yet their lusts and the Devil may Rule to their destruction for all that.

Object. *But is it not lawful to seek for dignity and superiority?*

Answ. No: not for *self*; but for God it is. You have warnings enough, and plain enough from Christ, if warnings would

would serve turn: He hath bid you [*sit not down in the highest room*:] he hath sharply rebuked them that strive for precedency, and who shall be the greatest: He hath told you, he that will be the greatest, must be the servant of all: and hath told you of stooping to the feet of the meanest, and condescending to men of low degree; and hath set little children before you to be your Teachers, and assured you that there is no entrance into his Kingdom in any other posture. He hath told you that God resisteth and abhorreth the Proud and that he that humbleth himself shall be exalted, and he that exalteth himself shall be brought low.

Object. *But how shall I know whether I seek preferment for God or my self? I hope it's God that I seek it for.*

Answ. 1. How shall a man know his own mind? you have darks hearts indeed if you cannot know your own Intentions, if you are but observant, and diligent, and willing to know them. 2. He that seeketh not Dignities for himself, but for God, will never seek to put by another that is as able and likely to do God service in the place as he: Nor will he seek it at all, if he see that God may be served as well without his seeking it: but will stay till God call him to it, and then he may expect his help and blessing. Few do intend God in it, that are Exalters of themselves. Indeed if you see that an enemy of the Gospel, or some unworthy, ungodly man is like to come into the place if you seek it not, by which the Church or the Common-wealth is like to be much injured, then you may seek it by lawful means; so that you can truly say, I would not do it for my self; but it is to serve God for his peoples good. 3. Nay he that seeketh not the Dignity for himself, will seek first and more to get in another, if he know another that is fitter then himself, and likely to do God more service: and this he will do heartily, and not dissemblingly. If you had not rather a worthier and more useful man were preferred before you, and seek not more for such then for your selves, you are plain self-seekers, whatever you may pretend. If a man should come to almost any of the Rulers of Nations, Churches, Colledges, or Corporations that have screwed themselves into the place of Government, and ask them, Did you know no-

man

man fitter for this place then your self, and have you sought first to get in a fitter man ? what can they for shame say to it ? If they say, *No*; they proclaim themselves notorious self-seekers ! For its very seldom, that an humble man is allowed to judge himself the fittest. 4. And he that seeketh Dignities for God and not for *himself*, will use them for God, and not for *himself*. For the Intention will command the *use*. He will deny himself in his superiority as well as if he were in the lowest; and will contrive how he may most serve and honour God: and this will be easily seen in his endeavours, whether it be God or self that he serves and liveth to.

And now I advise all that love their souls, to take heed of this aspiring act of *selfishness*. If you will needs seek your selves, and be your own exalters, you must trust to your selves, and be your own defenders: And then you will find that the lowest condition in the hand of God, is more safe and comfortable then the highest in your own hand. If God should lift you up to the top of the highest mountains, you may expect either a calm, or his protection in the storm, and to be as safe as those below: but if you lift up your selves, and Satan carry you to the pinacle of the Temple, take heed lest you thence cast down your selves by his temptations that did lift you up. Dignities and Honours, are not indeed the things that they seem to be to carnal eyes that see not the inside, but judge by the outward glittering shew. There is most holy Duty and work to be done, where is the greatest dignity. And certainly the life of greatest work and labour is not the life of greatest ease, or carnal pleasure: especially when it is the work of God that you must do: a work which all the world is against, and which Satan and all his power will resist: and which must meet with enmity and abundance of enmity, when ever you set about it: Though you are Commanderss, yet you are Soldiers; and you that are Leaders have the hottest standing, & must expect the sharpest conflicts. Do you think of your Dignities and Offices as places of meer superiority and honour and accomodation to your carnal selves? then are you Carnal men, and enter upon you know not what, and make your selves Traitors and Enemies to God, whom he is engaged to bring

bring down and be avenged on at last: you debase the sacred coin which bears the stamp and name of God. Magistracy is holy, and the Image of God, and you basely turn it into the Image of the flesh; and blot out Gods name from it, and stamp upon it the name of *self*, and traiterously make it your own, which was eminently his. Believe it, whoever you are, if you seek for places of Rule and Dignity with carnal selfish expectations, you must either use them accordingly when you have them, which is the readiest way to damnation in the world, or else you must find your expectations crost, and miss of all your carnal Ends; and find that the greatest toil and burden, which you expected should have been your chief content. God hath annexed the Honour and outward greatness, partly to encourage you to so hard a work, lest the burden should be too heavy, and partly to enable you to perform it, and give you some advantages against opposition. But though the cloathing of Authority and Rule be splendid, the substance thus covered is extraordinary Labour, and duty, and suffering. It is Honourable, but its an honourable burden, and an honourable painful difficult work. So that if men understood what Office and Authority is in Church or Commonwealth, and look't after the substance as well as the ornaments; the work as well as the Honour and Greatness; it would be an eminent piece of *self-denial* for a man to submit to the call of God, to be a Prince, a Judge, a Justice, or but a Constable: and men would as hardly be drawn to take the Office, as they are now to do the work of the Office in faithfulness and with courage and zeal for God; and that is almost as hard as an offendor is drawn to the stocks: Offices and high places, are not intended to accomodate the flesh; nor are they things to be ambitiously desired and sought for, by such as understand the Ends and use of them: but they are such laborious, hazardous ways of serving God, which a wise man knows must cost him more, then the honour will repay, and which a Good man will not run away from, when God calleth him thereto; but will so far Deny himself as to submit to them; but not thrust himself into them, as the Proud and selfish do. It is a work of Patience to a Godly man to be thus exalted; but it is

a work of Pride and self-seeking in others. Deny your selves so far as to submit to Government and Dignity, and bear it patiently if it be cast upon you, as being an excellent opportunity of serving God: But wish not for it, because of the Honour and advantages to the flesh: much less contend for it, or set your hearts on it. He that seeketh an Office or Honour for himself, must have another heart before he will use it for God. Its better with *Saul* to hide our selves from honour, then with *Absalom* to contrive and seek it: but best of all with *David* to stay till God call us, and then obey.

Chap. XLII.

The Love and good Word of others denied.

2. ANother part of *selfish Interest* to be *Denied*, is *the Love, and good Will, and Word of others.* This is a thing that may and must be desired to good ends; but not for *carnal self.* When *Paul* lookt at Gods honour and the good of souls, he [*became all things to all men that he might by all means save some; and this he* did, not for *self* but *for the Gospels sake*, and yet for himself in subordination to God, that he *might be partaker of it with them*] He would *give no offence to Jew or Gentile, or the Church of God: but pleased all men in all things* (that tended to their good) *not seeking his own profit, but the profit of many that they may be saved*] 1 Cor. 10. 32, 33. And he hath left it as the duty of the strongest Christians, [*not to please themselves, but every one to please his neighbour for his good to edification.*] But when *Paul* look't at *himself*, and his esteem among men, then he saith [*With me it is a very small thing, that I should be judged of you or of mans judgement*] 1 Cor. 4, 3. And Gal. 1. 10. [*Do I seek to please men? For if I yet pleased men, I should not be the Servant of Christ.*] Good natures are loth to provoke others to displeasure: and Grace moveth us to Please men for the saving of their souls. But its *Pride* and *Self-seeking* to desire to set up our selves in mens esteem, and to endear our selves for our selves into their affections.

It

It is Gods higheſt honour to be highlieſt eſteemed, and dearlieſt beloved, as being the moſt perfect and tranſcendent Good: And Proud men in this would aſpire to his Prerogative; and much affect to be *beloved* of all: and fain they would *ſit* neer mens hearts, and be the darlings of the world. This a fine, but dangerous ſin: and I doubt many that are guilty of it, never well conſidered that it is a ſin, and ſo great a ſin as indeed it is. Deny your ſelves in this. It is God that muſt be Loved of all, and not you: You muſt be content to *be hated of all men for his name ſake*, that he may be loved. Mens hearts were not made to be *your* throne, but Gods. Your work is to Love, and not ambitiouſly to ſeek for love. So far as your intereſt in mens affections doth conduce to Gods honour, and ſervice, and their good, deſire it, and ſpare not: But ſee that theſe be really your ends. But for your ſelves take heed of deſiring or ſeeking for mens Love. They are apt enough to have inordinate affections to the creature without your temptations. To Love God in you, and Love you for God, is their duty which you may provoke them to in ſeaſon: But ſeek not for any neerer intereſt in them, nor for ſuch a love as terminateth in your ſelves. Nature is exceeding ambitious of being beloved: but ſteal not Gods due. You are to be ſutors and ſollicitors for him, to win the hearts of as many to him as you can: aud not to ſpeak for your ſelves in his ſtead. Thanfully accept of mens *Ordinate* Love to you, if you have it: but if they deny it for you, for the ſake of Chriſt, and turn it into hatred, do you deny your ſelves herein, and remember that its no more then you were forwarned of; and no more then your Lord and his worthieſt ſervants have endured: What a Pattern is *Paul* that tels his converts, he *ſeeks not theirs but them, as parents lay up for the children and not children for the parents, and would gladly ſpend, and be ſpent for them, though the more he love, the leſs he were beloved*] 2 Cor. 12 14, 15. See that *you* Love *God and them*, and that is *your duty*: do that and you need not take care for the *Love* of men to *you*. Their Love is none of your felicity, and therefore their hatred depriveth you not of your felicity: for that lieth only in the Love of God. Here therefore ſelf muſt be denied.

Chap. XLIII.

The Reputation of Riches to be denied.

3. ANother part of the Honour which *self* must be denied in, is, *The Reputation of your Riches.* For *wealth* is one thing that men are proud of. Some desire to be esteemed richer then they are; and therefore go in the best apparel they can get, that they may not be thought to be persons of the lowest poorest sort. And some that are Rich, do glory in their Riches, and think they are much more to be honoured then the poor. But alas if they had well read and considered what Christ hath said of the danger of the rich, particularly in *Luke* 12 & 16. & 18. & 8. 14. *Mat.* 13. 22. *Mark* 10. 23. And what *James* saith to them, *James* 5. 1, 2. &c. they would see that Riches is not a thing to be Proud of. *Not many great and noble are called. God hath chosen the poor of this world, Rich in faith, to be heirs of the Kingdom.* The talents for which we must give such an account at the bar, should be rather the matter of our fear and trembling then of our Pride. That which makes our passage to heaven to be as the Camels through a needle's eye, I think should not much lift us up. All the Riches of the world do make you never the better thought of with God, or any wise man: Nor will they cause you to live a month the longer, or quiet your Consciences, or save you from death, or the wrath of God. The only worth of Riches, is, that you are better furnished then others to do God some kind of service, by relieving the poor, and helping the Church, and furthering many such good works: And for the sake of these good ends, you must patiently bear a state of Riches, yea and thankfully receive them, if they are given you by God; though the care and labour in a faithful distribution of them, and the danger of abusing them, and the reckoning to be made for them, are so great, as may deterr a wise man from a greedy seeking them, or glorying in them.

CHAP. XLIV.

Comlineſs and Beauty to be denied.

4. ANother part of the Honour that ſelf muſt be denied, is, *The Reputation of your perſonal comlineſs or beauty*: For ſuch fools and children ſin hath made folks, that many much ſet by the *Reputation* of *theſe*. And hence is moſt commonly the abuſe of Apparel. Every proud perſon is deſirous of that which will make them ſeem the hanſomeſt or beautifullieſt perſons unto others; and make it their care to ſet forth themſelves to the eyes of beholders. What they indeed are, we can ſee as well in the meaneſt attire: but what they would be thought to be, we may beſt ſee in this. But of this I ſpoke before; yea ſome that think they are not Proud of their comelineſs, yet cannot endure to be eſteemed ill-favoured or uncomly, and ſo ſhew that Pride which they would deny. I confeſs theſe are commonly but the temptations of women, and procacious youth. But one would think it ſhould be eaſie for a few ſober thoughts to cut their combs, and let them ſee how little cauſe they have to be proud of beauty or comelineſs of the fleſh. Alas what is that body that you are proud of! Filth and corruption covered with a cleaner skin then ſome of your neighbors. Ah, but the skin is thin, and if that be all you have to glory in, it is as frail, as contemptible. There's many a pretty flower in the common field that's trodden down by the feet of beaſts, that have a gloſs and hue incomparably beyond your beauty. I asked you before, what beauty you will have to glory of, when you have dwelt but a few months in the grave; or if the ſmall Pox, or Leproſie ſhould cloche you with another coloured skin: or if a Cancer ſhould but ſeize upon your face, and turn it into ſuch an ugly ſhape, as makes men tremble to behold it: or when wrinkled age hath made you as another perſon: or when death hath deprived you of that ſoul, which was your beauty, and laid you out as a prey and ſacrifice to corruption. Ah that ever ſuch a skin full of dirt, ſuch a bag

of filth, should yet be proud, that's carried about by a living soul, and by it kept a little while from falling down as a senseless clod, and turning into a stinking corpse! They are short-sighted, and short-witted as well as graceless, that cannot look so far before them or within them, as to see that which may take them down from being proud of any comelineſs of the flesh. One would think this should be so easie a part of *self-denial* as any graceless one might reach, by a little use of the Reason that is left them.

CHAP. XLV.

Strength and Valour to be denied.

5. ANother piece of Vain-glory to be Denied, is in *The Reputation of strength and valour*. The witless part of men, especially in their procacious humours, do use to be carried away with this, as witless women with the former. Hence commonly are their matches of Running and Wrestling, and many exercises of activity and strength: yea and hence commonly are their duels and murders: It seems such a dishonourable thing to them, to be thought a Coward, or unable to defend themselves, and to be crow'd over by their enemy, that they will venture body and soul upon it, rather then they will put up such indignities, or lie under the dishonour of being Cowards. Yea, and (would one think it) some Jesuits are such Carnal Doctors that they teach men, that if they be challenged, and their honour lie upon it, they may meet the challenger there in a defensive posture, and fight with him to defend their honour: yea and in many other cases, they may kill another for their Honour, seeing their honour is more to them then lives. O miserable Teachers, and miserable souls that do obey them! Christ hath taught you another lesson, even *to despise the shame*, Heb. 12. 2, 3. and to *humble your selves*, and intimateth that such cannot be believers, which *receive honour of one another, and seek not the honour that cometh from*

from God only, Joh. 5.44. Its more Honour to obey God in suffering, then to be so valiant as to murder another man. The day is neer when he will appear the Honourable man, that was likest to Jesus Christ, that when he *was reviled, reviled not again, when he suffered he threatneth not, but committed himself to him that judgeth righteously*, 1 Pet. 2.23. Blind sinners! do you think it more honourable to *do hurt*, then to *suffer hurt*? yea to be like the Devil, who is a murderer, then to Christ that was a sufferer, and came not to destroy mens lives, but to save them and lay down his own. Can any thing be more Honourable then to be the children of the heavenly Father? and if you be such, you must *Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them that despightfully use you and persecute you*] Mat. 5.44. What a Case are those mens understandings in that think it their Honour to revenge themselves when God hath so forbidden it? *Rom.* 12.19.

Chap. XLVI.

Wisdom and Learning to be denied.

6. ANother piece of vain-glory to be denied, is in the *Reputation of Wisdom and Learning*. The things themselves are very excellent, and to be desired and much sought after: but not for our own Honour, but the Service and Honour of the Lord. And the greater is the worth of the thing, the greater is the temptation to vain-glory in them that have it, and the harder it is to deny themselves herein. This part *of self-denial* consisteth not in a contempt of Learning or Wisdom, nor in a neglect of it: for this were a sin; but in a neglect of *self* that would make an advantage of it, for its own carnal exaltation; and in a contempt of the Honour and vain-glory which may redound by it to our selves, further then such honour is serviceable to God. O how sinful and miserable a life do abundance of learned men live in the world! Their whole

whole life is but one continued vice, and that a sin of a most hainous nature, even the exercise of Pride and Self-seeking, when yet they take themselves *for* Saints, because they are not such as are accounted scandalous sinners in the world. They sacrifice their precious time and studies to their Pride and fancies, and not to God: Too many hours and years are spent to gain the Reputation of being Learned men: Too many disputations are managed; yea (odious sacriledge) too many Sermons are preached, and too many learned Books are written, to gain the Reputation of being Learned men! Ah miserable, low, unworthy studies! Profane sermons! ungodly labours! and poor reward! O how it netleth some Proud spirits if they hear that they are taken to be no Scholars! And how many take their University Degrees, to be meerly the wings of this part of their vain-glory. Learning and Degrees, and the Reputation of it, are all good, if they be valued and used but for God: But they are so much the worse when they are sacrificed to *self* and made the food and fuel of Pride. Learn therefore this part of self-denial.

Chap. XLVII.

Reputation of Gifts and Spiritual Abilities, &c.

7. ANother piece of vain-glory to be denied, is, *The Reputation of our Gifts and spiritual abilities*: I mean such as Praying, and Preaching and Disputing, and good Conference, to have readiness for words, and liveliness of expression, and exactness of method: to be esteemed in all these a very able man by other, is an high-part of *self-interest* to be denied. The duties themselves must be denied by none, for they are the service of God, commanded us by his word: But it is the Honour that *self* presumeth to hunt after in these holy things. And it is a double sin *here* to seek our *selves*, when we are specially commanded to seek God! and where the work is instituted for that end: and when we pretend to seek God, and to deny our selves!

selves! The greater are our abilities to do God service, the more resolutely and thankfully we should improve them in his service. But we must remember that they are given us to save others by our improvement, and not to destroy our selves by our Pride. Get as great abilities as you can, and when you have them, thank God for them, and use ~~for~~ them for him to the uttermost of your Power: but takeheed lest Pride should sacrifice them to your *selves* and pervert them from your Masters service.

The Persons that have most need of this advice, are especially these following. 1. Young unexperienced Professors, that are but lately turned to a Profession of a Godly life; that have so much illumination as sheweth them much that before they knew not, and raiseth them above the vulgar measure, but yet hath made them but smatterers and *half-knowing* men; These are they that the Apostle requireth should not be made Bishops or Pastors of the Church, because of their pronenes to this very sin, that now we are speaking of, 1 Tim 3. 6. [*Not a Novice, lest being lifted up with Pride, he fall into the condemnation of the Devil*] The spirit of God here intimateth to us, that *Novices* are the likest to be lifted up with Pride, and that this Pride is the way to the Condemnation of the Devil.

2. And men of great abilities, natural or acquired, that have withall unsanctified hearts, are ordinarily transported with this odious vice. A strong wit and a voluble tongue, and learning to furnish it with matter, are notable servants to Pride of heart, where that spiritual illumination and holiness is wanting, that should abase the Proud, and turn mens Parts a better way. To all that are apt to be tainted with this odious vice, I would recommend these following considerations.

1. Consider what a dangerous sign it is of a graceless hypocritical heart, where Pride of Gifts doth much prevail. It is as inseparable from a child of God, to be humble and little in his own esteem, as from a new-born Child to be really lesser then men at age. No more sincerity, then humility in any.

2. Consider, what cause of deep humiliation you carry

about you in every duty! Besides all the wants and loathsom corruptions of your souls, which follow you wherever you goe, the very sins of your duties, one would think, should humble you. Oh to have such low conceptions, such dull apprehensions, such heartless, unreverent poor expressions of such a God, such a Christ, such a glory, and such holy truth, should make us ashamed to open our Lips before the Lord, and wonder that he doth not tread us into hell, instead of regarding us or our services, and that fire doth not come forth from his jealousie and consume us! It should make us so far from glorying in our performances, that it should drive us to Christ in every duty, to take him with us to shelter us from the flames of holy jealousie; so that we should not dare to go any further then he goes before us, and stands between us and the wrath of God, nor to speak a word but in his name, nor to expect any welcom but on his account. Shall a wretch be Proud of that performance whose failings deserve everlasting torments! Must you be beholden to Christ to save you from the Hell that the sins of your performances deserve; and yet dare you be proud of them? Let a Papist run that desperate path, that rails at us for saying that our best duties are mixt with sin, and that this sin deserves the wrath of God; Let them refuse a Physician that think not themselves sick; and let them tell Christ they will not be beholden to him for a pardon for the sins of their prayers and other duties: but for shame let not *us* be guilty of this, who profess to be better acquainted with our infirmities.

3. Consider also that you have to do with so Holy and Glorious a God, that to be Proud before Him, and that in and of our very service of him, is a sin whose greatness surpasseth our apprehensions. Had you to do with a man like your selves, you might better lift up your selves against him. There is nothing comparatively in the presence of the greatest Prince, to humble and abase you: But to be Proud before the God of heaven, and that in and of our lamentably weak addresses to him, O what an horridly impious, unreasonable thing is this? O man, if thy eyes were opened to see a little, a very little of the glory of that blessed God thou speakest

to,

to, how flat wouldst thou fall down? how wouldst thou fear and tremble? and cry out as the Prophet, Isa. 6. 5. [*Wo is me, for I am undone, because I am a man of unclean lips, and dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips: for mine eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts*] Or as Job 40. 4. [*Behold I am vile, What shall I answer thee? I will lay my hand upon my mouth.* And Chap. 42. 5, 6. [*I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear: but now mine eye seeth thee: wherefore I abhorr my self and repent in dust and ashes*] One glimpse of Gods Majesty would take down thy self-exalting thoughts, and humble thee with a witness.

4. Consider the examples of the holiest of Gods servants. The example of *Job* and *Isaiah* I have now mentioned. *Moses* himself did think himself unmeet to speak in Gods message, Exod. 4. 10. *He said unto the Lord, I am not eloquent, neither heretofore, nor since thou hast spoken to thy servant: but I am of slow speech and of a slow tongue.*] And v. 13. *He said O, my Lord, send I pray thee by the hand of him whom thou wilt send*] When God sent *Jer.* 1. 6. he said, *Ah Lord God, behold I cannot speak: for I am a child*] And *Paul* cries out [*Who is sufficient for these things*! 2 Cor. 2. 16.] So that it hath been the course of the most Seraphical Prophets, and holy Apostles to have low thoughts of their own abilities for duty: And yet have you enough to be Proud of?

5. And consider that the Nature of the holy employment that you are upon, one would think, should be enough to humble you. It is a confessing of sin, unworthiness and guilt, and will you be Proud of this? It is a confessing that you deserve everlasting torment; And will you be Proud of such a confession as this? The Lord be merciful to us, and save us from this unreasonable vice; who would think that it should be thus with a man in his wits? To confess that he deserveth Hell-fire; and to be Proud of that Confession! your Petitions are all humbling, if they be according to the word; you are beggars for your lives, for pardon of many and hainous sins, and should come as with the rope about your necks: you beg for deliverance from eternal misery: and should you be proud of such requests! should beggars be

Proud, yea such needy miserable beggars, and be proud of their very begging? Nay, your very thanksgiving it self is humbling. For what do you give thanks for, but for salvation from these odious sins, and the damnation which you have deserved? And shall a thief be proud that he is pardoned and taken from the gallows? Pride is contrary to the very Nature and meaning of all those holy duties that you are Proud of.

6. Yea the Gifts themselves that you are Proud of, should humble you. For 1. They are from God, and not your selves. 1 Cor. 4. 7. [*For who maketh thee to differ? and what hast thou that thou didst not receive? Now if thou didst receive it, why dost thou glory, as if thou hadst not received it?* 2. You received them not for your selves, but for God: and therefore have no reason your selves to be lifted up by them. 3. All Gifts are for Labour and duty, and must be once accounted for: and therefore should keep you in humility and fear. To be Proud of Gods Gifts, is to be Proud of that which is given you to destroy Pride in your selves and others: For this is the End of them.

7. And it is a sign that you want exceeding much of that which you are Proud of. You are Proud of *Knowledge*: when as if it were not for *want* of Knowledge of that which should humble you, you would not be so Proud. You are Proud of your *worth*: and it is for want of real worth that you are Proud. More light and grace, and parts would shew you that which would make you blush at the things that you were Proud of.

8. And consider that you take the Course to provoke God to bereave you of his Gifts. He gave them to you for another use. If you will turn them against his face by Pride, when he gave them to keep you humble: when you will exalt your carnal *selves* by it, which he gave you to exalt his Majesty, what can you expect but he should take them from you? And its an easie matter with him to do it yea to take away your very understandings, and leave you to the heavy plague of Madness, seeing you were Proud of your understandings, when alas, poor worms, you had so little cause.

9. If once you grow Proud of your parts and gifts, you are

are in the high way to be given over to some fearful fall; at best to particular scandals, if not to some damnable heresie or Apostacy. God *may* prevent it by your Humiliation: but you are in the common road that leads to it. Its much to be feared that God will so far leave you to your selves, as to let you fall into the dirt of some notorious sin, that your shame may fly abroad the world, instead of the vain-glorious fame which you desired: and that you may have somewhat to humble you that shall be written in your fore-heads, and cannot be denied or hid. Or if you be hypocrites, and for damnation, it is most likely that you are in the ready way to some desperate Heresie, or flat Apostacy. For we see that these are too frequently the consequents of spiritual Pride.

10. Lastly, Consider that the Gifts that you are Proud of, are in danger of being unsuccessful to the Church; ~~He~~ may I confess do good to others by them, though they do but choak your selves; but ordinarily he denieth success to the Proud, and blesseth weaker endeavors of the humble. Yea often such men and all their parts become a plague and trouble to the Church. For they use them to foment the Heresies and Divisions which they are given over to: and do more hurt then the ignorant or the common sort of the Prophane. Learn therefore to deny your selves in the Reputation of your performances. If you feel any tickling delight when you are applauded, cast water on it suddenly as on a fire kindled in your souls from Hell. If you perceive the least stirring of discontent or envy, when the Preaching or prayers of another are preferred, and yours less set by, take heed, and quench it; for you are entertaining a dangerous temptation. But if you should be so far lifted up, as to set up your Judgements above their worth, and rise against your Teachers and the Church of Christ, and desire to step beyond your callings, that your parts may be taken notice of, and you may be somebody in the Church, and verifie the prophesie of *Paul*, Acts 20. 30. [*Also of your own selves shall men arise speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them*] I say, when once you come to this, its time to fear lest you be utterly forsaken, & become the shame and scorn of men, as you became the scourge & troublers

of the Church, and left your self-exalting lay you as low as hell.

Chap. XLVIII.

Reputation of being Orthodox, how far —

8. ANother piece of vain-glory to be denied, is, *The Reputation of being Orthodox, or of the right religion.* The thing it self is in the Essentials of absolute necessity to salvation: But the *reputation* of it, is a thing that we must much deny our selves in. For it commonly fals out in most of the world, that the *thing* it self, and the *Reputation* of it, are inconsistent: and no man can be Orthodox and of the right Religion, but he must be taken to be heterodox and of the wrong Religion: For the wrong is in most places taken for the right. But through the great Mercy of God, it is not commonly so in *England*, nor in the Reformed Churches abroad, in any great and necessary points. Among us Truth hath the advantage of Reputation! and so may it continue while the Sun endureth! But yet there is use for this part of self-denial even with us. We converse among many Sects and Parties of various Opinions, and all of them are Confident that they are in the right, and that we are Erroneous and against the Truth: so say the Papists, and so say the Libertines, and many others. And there is no way to gain the Reputation of being sound and orthodox with any of these men, but by turning to them, and forsaking the truth, and ceasing to be Orthodox indeed. In *Spain*, or *Italy*, or with *English* Papists, you must be accounted Hereticks, or yield to heresie: you must either cease to be true Catholicks, or be content to be esteemed no Catholicks: You have your choice whether you will really be Schismaticks, or be esteemed and called Schismaticks. And so you will be used among most Sects, who judge of Truth and Error according to their own deluded apprehensions. Yea, and among the Orthodox indeed, because they also have their errors, and are not orthodox in all things, you must look for the same measure in those particulars wherein they are mistaken. For thinking them-

themselves in the right, they will too often take it for their duty to let fly at others, as erroneous or dangerous persons that are not of their mind: And in this mistake, they think they do God service to defame dissenters, and raise jealousies and suspicions of them, and bid men take heed of them, as of men that hold some dangerous opinions; when it is themselves that are deceived, and should turn those jealousies and cautions homewards. In such Cases as these it is a hard strait that a servant of Christ is put to; when he must either err or be supposed to err. But the principal temptation lieth in those Countries, where Error hath got the major vote, and is patronized both by Book and sword, and custom hath fixed the name of Truth upon the foulest Heresies, and the name of Heresie upon saving Truths: Here a poor Christian is sorely tempted and put to a lamentable strait. O saith he, *if I were reputed but to be base, or beggarly, or contemptible, I could bear it; but Heresie and Schism are such odious things that no man should be patient under the imputation of them.* *Answ.* Are they such odious things? Take heed of them then lest out of your own mouths you be judged. If you think the matter so small that you will rather *be* an Heretick or Schismatick then be *called* or accounted *one*, it seems you take it for no Odious thing. Is the *name* or the *thing* more odious to you? Had you rather be erroneous, or be *thought* to be so? If the *Thing* be most odious to you, the *Name* will be the more tolerable. But if the *Name* be most Odious to you, it is *Dishonour* and not Error or Schism that you are against. Had you rather part with *Truth* and *Religion*, or with the name and reputation of them? If you set so much by *Self* and so little by *Truth*, as to *let go* Truth for fear of being thought *to let it go*; for shame do not take on you to be *Lovers of Truth* but of *your selves*; nor haters of *Error*, but of *Dishonour*.

And consider further that you may lose the Reputation of being Orthodox, and Catholick, and of the right Religion, without losing any of the favour of God; nay it may be a suffering for his sake that may advance you in his favour, and assure you of the Reward of Martyrs. For saith Christ, *Mat.* 5. 11, 12. [*Blessed are ye when men shall revile you, and persecute you,*

you, and ſhall ſay all manner of evil againſt you falſly for my ſake. Rejoyce and be exceeding glad, for great is your Reward in heaven: for ſo perſecuted they the Prophets that were before you] So that you ſee the thing that you ſo abhorr, is matter of exceeding joy: Even to be falſly counted an Heretick or Erroneous for the ſake of Chriſt and Truth: we are *bleſſed* when we are falſly reviled as Erroneous, and have all theſe evil ſayings againſt us. But to be *ſuch indeed*, is to be accurſed: Though the *name* of Hereſie will ſtand with the ſpecial Love of God, yet *Hereſie* it ſelf he utterly abhorrs. And whether do you think it is better to part with Truth and the Favour of God with it; or with the Name and Reputation of Truth, while we keep both Truth and the favour of God? Deny *your ſelves* then even as to the Reputation of Faith and Orthodoxneſs; For you will certainly deny the Faith, if you cannot deny the name of it, to preſerve it.

CHAP. XLIX.

Reputation of Godlineſs and Honeſty how far—

9. ANother piece of Honour that *ſelf* muſt be denied in, is, *The Reputation of Godlineſs and Honeſty*. Concerning both the former and this I muſt ſay, by way of caution, that the Reputation both of Faith and Godlineſs, is a great Mercy, and not to be deſpiſed, nor prodigally caſt away by our own negligence or miſcarriages; nor unthankfully to be received: But yet 1. It is not to be deſired for it ſelf, but for God, that it may help and advantage us to ſerve him, or as it is a Mercy that brings the report of his love. 2. And the greater the Mercy is, the greater is our temptation, when it would deprive us of a far greater mercy then it ſelf: I have oft thought it was a very high paſſage for an Heathen to ſay as *Seneca* did, that [No man doth ſhew a higher eſteem of goodneſs, than he that can let go the Name or Reputation of being a good man, rather then let go his goodneſs it ſelf.] The world is ſo much unacquainted with goodneſs, that they know it not

not when they ſee it; but call it by thoſe odious names that leaſt agree with it. Their Judgements follow their *Natures*, diſpoſitions and *intereſts*: And therefore they cannot take that to be *good* which is contrary to theſe. A feather-bed is no better to a ſwine then a mire-lake: A banquet is not ſo Good to a Cow as a green paſture. As the perſon is himſelf, ſo do all things ſeem good or evil to him. The *Toad* or *Snake* hath no ſuch odious apprehenſions of it ſelf as *men* have. And hence it is that to ungodly men the beſt men and beſt actions ſeem to be the worſt. And hence alſo it is, that in all Ages Godlineſs hath been matter of reproach: and the beſt have been laden with the heavieſt calumnies. *David* had enemies that laid to his charge the things that he never thought of. And it ſeems by the ſtrain of *Shimei* in his railing, that they took him to be but a Traitor, becauſe King *Saul* was againſt him; and to be *a bloody man*, becauſe he had been engaged in the wars, 2 Sam. 16. 7, 8. [*Come out, come out, thou bloody man, and thou man of* Belial: *the Lord hath returned upon thee all the blood of the houſe of* Saul *in whoſe ſtead thou haſt raigned*] See what a wicked perſon *David* was eſteemed by ſuch fellows as this! And yet he ſo far denied himſelf here, as that he would not hear of revenge upon the railer, but takes it as a tryal ſent from God. And two ſpecials reaſons moved him to bear it. One was the remembrance of that ſin againſt God and his Servant *Uriah*, which he knew God was now chaſtiſing him for: And therefore being under the rod of the Lord, he durſt not think of revenge upon the inſtrument; and being ſenſible that he had brought all this upon himſelf, he durſt not let fly too much at others. The other was, that God had raiſed up (by permiſſive providence) the ſon of his bowels againſt him: and therefore he thought it an unſeemly thing to be much offended with a ſtranger for leſs. And ſuch Reaſons as theſe have we alſo to perſwade us to Patience and Self-denial in the like Caſe. The Lord Jeſus himſelf who had no ſin at all, eſcaped not theſe cenſures of malicious men. He was eſteemed a friend or Companion of Publicans and Sinners, yea a gluttonous perſon and a wine-bibber; yea a deceiver; yea a conjurer that did his works by the help of the Devil, *Mat.*

11. 19. *Luke* 7. 34. *Mat.* 27. 63. *Joh.* 7. 12. *Mat.* 12. 27. What uſage the holy Apoſtles themſelves had, and how they behaved themſelves under all, you may conjecture by that one paſſage, (to mention no more) 1 Cor. 4. 9, 10, 11, 12, 13. [*For I think, God hath ſet forth us the Apoſtles laſt, as it were men appointed to death: For we are made a ſpectacle to the world, and to Angels, and to men: we are fools for Chriſts ſake, but ye are wiſe in Chriſt; we are weak, but ye are ſtrong; ye are honorable, but we are deſpiſed; Even to this preſent hour we both hunger and thirſt, and are naked, and are buffeted, and have no certain dwelling place; and labour working with our own hands; being reviled, we bleſs; being perſecuted we ſuffer it: being defamed, we intreat: we are made as the filth of the world, and the offſcouring of all things to this day*] The like uſage had the Chriſtians after the Apoſtles days. They were ſlandered by the Pagans as if they ſacrificed, and eat their own children, and putting out the lights had commonly been unclean together after their holy exerciſes: And when they caſt them to the Lyons to be devoured, and many wayes tormented them, it was as *ungodly men*, for preaching againſt the Heathen Gods, and refuſing to offer ſacrifice to them. And therefore the rabble was wont thus to cry for Judgement againſt them, [*Tollite impios*] [*tollite impios*] *Away with the ungodly Chriſtians!* The wicked multitude that were drowned in filthineſs and ungodlineſs, did think themſelves Religious men, and the Chriſtians to be ungodly. So that they were fain to live and die under a Reputation as contrary to the truth, as darkneſs is contrary to light.

And this uſage hath ſtill been the attendant of true Godlineſs. When the Papiſts burn Gods ſervants at the ſtake, it is for ſuppoſed Hereſie and impiety: they put a painted cap and coat upon them, made of paper, on which the Images of Devills are pictured to make the people believe, that they are ungody perſons, the ſervants of the Devil, and poſſeſſed by him already, and unworthy to live any longer among men. When they butchered the poor *Waldenſes* and *Albigenſes* by thouſands, it was under the name of ungodly hereticks. The ignorant ungodly rabble among us now, that hate and revile thoſe that ſeek after God more diligently then themſelves, have yet more

deviliſh

devillſh wit then to oppoſe them directly under the name of honeſt godly men; but they firſt make the world believe that they are Hypocrites, and Proud, and Self-conceited, and Covetous, and ſecretly are as bad as others, and theſe are the the things, if you will believe them, that they hate and ſpeak againſt them for. But then how comes it topaſs that it is their *Praying* and *Preciſeneſs* that is ſo much in the ſcorners mouths? Doth that ſignifie *Hypocriſie or Pride*? Why do they not *commend* the *good* while they ſpeak againſt the evil? and joyn with them in the holy worſhip and ways of God, while they oppoſe their ſuppoſed vicioufneſs? Doth the name [*Puritane*] ſignifie a covetous man, or a vicious perſon? or rather one that will not be content to venture his ſoul in the common, impure, ungodly courſes of the world! And how comes it to paſs that a man may quietly enough follow ſuch vices, if he will but forbear the profeſſion of Godlineſs? But (to leave theſe wretches in the dirt where we find them) by this you may ſee the common meaſure that is to be expected from the world: If you will *be truly godly*, you muſt be *taken* for *ungodly*, or for *hypocrites*, that ſeem to be godly when you are not.

But its eaſie to bear this charge when it falls upon a whole ſociety, and takes us but in the crowd among the reſt, and when we have ſo much honourable company to ſuffer with us: But it goes nearer us when we are ſingled out by name, and noted and talkt of all about as Hypocrites, or Proud, or worſe then others. But that alſo muſt be born by thoſe that will be Chriſtians.

But the greateſt trial of all is, when the Servants of God that ſhould help us in our ſuffering, have got a hard report of us, and by miſ-information we have loſt our credit even with them. Under all theſe falſe and injurious reports, direct and ſtabliſh your own minds by the help of theſe Conſiderations following.

1. It may be there is ſome ſpecial cauſe that you ſhould try and judge your ſelves: and ſo God doth ſuffer other men to judge you, to awaken you to ſelf-judging. However make this uſe of it, and you are ſure to be no loſers by the reproach. Enter into your hearts, and ſearch them throughly

as before the Lord, and see if there be any way of wickedness in them which hitherto you have not discovered: Try whether there be Hypocrisie and Pride or not; Especially when it is the servants of God that think hardly of you, and above all, if it be wise, impartial men that are acquainted with you, its then your duty to be very jealous of your hearts and ways, and to fear lest you are guilty, and to search the more diligently, and not be quiet till you either find out your sin, or be sure that you are clear. And if you be clear in that point, yet suspect and search lest there be some other secret or allowed sin, which God would detect to you, or excite you against by the injurious censures of those that have reproached you.

2. When you have searcht and cleared your own Consciences, then consider further, that though you are not such as you are censured to be, yet *sinners* you are, and you know your sins in others kind are so many and so great that you should bear the more patiently to be hardly thought of, when you know your selves to be so bad. If indeed you are godly, you have seen a sink of uncleanness in your selves, and have condemned your selves oft, and loathed your selves for your abominations, and bewailed them before the Lord. And is it suitable for such a spirit to be eager after the *reputation* of sincerity, and to be much troubled that you are taken by others to be naught?

3. And consider also that your Case may be as *Davids* was, and God may possibly make this reproach a chastisement for some former sin, and a means to humble you for it more throughly, and to reclaim you from it. Perhaps he bids (by permissive providence) some *Shimei* curse you. It may be the voice of a slanderer must do that which the voice of a Preacher could not do. And then it is your work to look behind you and within you, more then without you, and to hearken more to the voice of God and Conscience, then of the slanderer: and to take it as the rod of God, and a call to a more serious Repentance.

4. And consider that when you are under the false Censures of the world, you may have the inward peace of a good con-

conscience, which is better then all the applause of men: And this being a continual feast, they cannot do much against your quietness, as long as they cannot deprive you of this.

5. Yea moreover, you have the Approbation of God himself, and that should satisfie you against the censure of all the world. Even a Proud man if he have any wit, can bear the Contempt of the ignorant vulgar, if he have but the applause of great and wise, and learned men: As that Orator that valued the judgement of *Socrates* above all the rest of his auditory. But all the wisest men in the world are fools in comparison of God. Having *his* Approbation, you have the Greatest, the Best, and the Wisest on your side; and a Judgement for you that will weigh down the judgement of ten thousand worlds.

7. And if you value not Gods approbation above mans, its a sign that you are hypocrites indeed, and so the censure is not unjust: But if you do, then you will acquiesce in it, though man condemn you; and say as the Apostle, Rom. 8. 33, 34. *Who shall lay any thing to the charge of Gods elect? It is God that justifieth, who is he that condemneth?* And as 1 Cor 4. 3, 4. [*With me it is a very small thing, that I should be judged of you, or of mans judgement — but he that judgeth me is the Lord.*]

And remember that the great day of Judgement is neer at hand, that will set all strait which the slanderous tongues of men made crooked. Stay but a while, and the Glory of Christ, and the sentence of your judge, will dispell all the unjust reproaches that were on you, and wash off all the blots that were falsly laid on your good name: *and he will bring forth your righteousness as the light, and your judgement as the noon-day*: for *there is nothing hid that shall not be then revealed.*

8. In the mean time God will take cāre of your name: He will make the very tongues that slander you to honour you; in the blindness of their reproaches, crossing themselves. As the Papists by the poor *Waldenses*, saying they were the *more dangerous hereticks, because they held all the Articles of faith, and lived godly and honestly, and were reputed holy, but only that they were against the Church of* Rome. As you trust God with

your health, and wealth, so must you do with your Reputation, even in point of Honesty, and be satisfied that he can clear you when he pleases.

9. And it is not Gods ordinary way to leave the Reputation of his servants wholly uncleared even in this world. If *one* condemn them, *another* shall Justifie them: and commonly the wisest and best men Justifie them, and the most foolish and ungodly are they that condemn them: And cannnot you bear the words of fools and children? The proudest man can pass by a contempt or slander from a drunken man, an ideot, or a mad man, as being no dishonour to him: and cannot you bear the censures of the distracted world? Or if they are better men that slander you, its too to one but it is the more foolish or passionate sort of them; and that the judgement of the more wise and sober is against them, and vindicateth your reputation. Or if at the present they do not, its ten to one but Providence shall work to the clearing of your reputation, either in your life-time, or when you are dead. Most of the Servants of God that were most hated and slandered, while they lived on earth, are cleared and honoured now they are dead. God is not disregardful of his servants names.

10. But however it go, you are secured of the main; that which you expected or covenanted for with God, you shall be sure of. If you have the *Thing*, you may easily bear the want of the *name*. Hath the Spirit of God renewed and sanctified you? are you made the living members of Christ, and the sons of God, and the heirs of Heaven? I hope you may well spare then the applause of men, and easily bear it, if you be *reputed* to be destitute of what you have. If you *are* in health, it will not much trouble you if it be reported that you are sick: And if you *are* alive, you can bear it if the report go that you are dead: For as long as you have the *thing* you can spare the *name*: And if you *have* Christ, and Grace, and Pardon, and Justification, and Title to eternal life, cannot you endure to have men think that you are without them? How basely do you undervalue these inestimable things, when the thoughts of a mans mind, or the words of a mans mouth can blast the comforts of them all? As if you said to the world, *It*

is

is not Chriſt, and Grace, and Pardon, and Salvation, that will ſerve me, without the applauſe of men! How baſely think you of God, and how highly of men, if this be your mind! It is more excuſable for a *Haman* to ſay of all his honour and wealth that they ſatisfie him not, or do him no good, as long as he wants but *Mordecai*'s obeyſance, then for a Chriſtian to ſay of God, of Chriſt, of Glory, All this will not ſerve my turn as long as men take me for an hypocrite or ungodly. For there is not a ſatisfying ſufficieny in Honours and wealth, as there is God and glory. As long as you have the precious treaſure, methinks you may give loſers leave to talk. It was not for the good words of men that you became Chriſtians, and Covenanted with God, but for pardon and ſalvation: and theſe you ſhall have: God will perform his Covenant to you, and give you both his Kingdom, and ſo much of worldly things as overplus, as is truly good for you; and what would you have more? You ſhall have the Inheritance and Crown of bleſſedneſs; and will not that ſerve your turn without a few good words from ſilly man! I hope you would be loth to change Rewards with the Hypocrite! Why then do you ſo much deſire his Reward, and ſo much undervalue your own! Though *his* be *preſent*, and *yours* be *future*, I hope you think it but a doleful hearing, to have Chriſt ſay [*Verily they have their Reward*] in compariſon of his promiſe to his reproached ſervants [*Verily great is your Reward in Heaven*] Mat. 6. 2. Mat. 5. 12.

And now I hope in all theſe ten particular conſiderations you may ſee reaſon enough for *ſelf-denial* in the very Reputation of your Godlineſs and Honeſty; and why you ſhould endure joyfully to be eſteemed ungodly and diſhoneſt rather then to be ſo.

CHAP.

Chap. L.

A Renowned and Perpetuated Name to be denied.

10. THE last point of Honour which *self* must be denied in, is, *A Renowned and Perpetuated Name.* For to that height doth Pride aspire, that no less will satisfie, where there is any apparent hope of this: though in those that sit so low that they see no ground to hope for such a thing, the desires after it are not so kindled as they be in others, that think the prey is within their reach. Fain men would be famous and talkt of through the world: They would have their real and supposed worth made known as far as may be. And when they die, they would fain have their names survive, that they may be great in the estimation of posterity, and magnified by all that mention them. And so deeply are men possessed with this dangerous sin, that they account this perpetuated fame for their felicity. And there was nothing that most of the Heathens did preferr before it: but when they seemed to be most virtuous, heroical, and patient, it was but to be thus esteemed of after they were dead.

If you ask me, How far a surviving reputation may be regarded? I answer 1. So far as the Interest of God, or his Gospel, Church, or Cause, or the publike good, or the good of our posterity is concerned in it, and may be promoted by it, thus far it is lawful and a duty to value it, desire it, and seek it. For if we have throughly searched our hearts, and can say unfeignedly that it is God, and his cause and honour that we principally intend, and desire our own honour but as a Means to his, and therefore desire it no further then it is such a means; then we may justly desire both the extension and surviving of our reputation if we are groundedly perswaded that its like to conduce to these happy ends. As for example: A Prince that owns the cause of God, and makes such Laws for the common good as may exceedingly promote it, if they be observed by posterity, must have a great regard to his present

ſent and ſurviving fame, becauſe the honour of his Laws will depend much upon the honour of his name: and if once the people vilifie *him*, they will be likely to vilifie and caſt off his Laws, to the hurt of Church and Common-wealth, and their own undoing. And even as to the ſucceſs of their preſent government, they ſhould be very careful of their fame: ſo alſo a Miniſter of the Goſpel muſt be very careful of his preſent and future reputation. For at preſent, the ſaving good of his auditors doth much depend upon it. For if they have a baſe eſteem of the Paſtor, they will be unlikely to give diligent attention to his doctrine, but diſeſteem it as they do the ſpeaker, and it is not likely to go to their hearts: Nor will they ſeek his advice in the great matters of ſalvation, and the difficult caſes and dangers that they meet with; but to the great hazzard of their ſouls will ſlight the neceſſary aſſiſtance of him that is appointed to be their guide to heaven, and will ſet light by all the Ordinances of God. And therefore the Paſtors Reputation is ten thouſand times more beneficial and neceſſary to the people then to himſelf. For alas it is but their good *thoughts and words* that *he* receiveth; which add little to his happineſs: but its everlaſting life which *they* may receive, by that Word of God and help from him, which is furthered by his Reputation. And therefore as Miniſters ſhould be exceeding watchful againſt Pride, that they deſire not Honour for themſelves, ſo when they are ſure that God is their end, they muſt be exceeding careful of their own Reputation, and avoid all occaſions and appearances of evil, and purchaſe it by all juſt means: For though honour be worth little, yet the Cauſe of God and the ſouls of men are worth much; and we muſt not be prodigal of our Maſters Talents, and ſuch as are very uſeful to his ſervice: Our Reputation is Gods and the Churches due, and to be cheriſhed for their uſe. Eſpecially thoſe Miniſters muſt be careful of their Reputation, that by Reformation or Publick uſeful writings are capable of profiting Poſteriy: and they may deſire the ſurviving of their honours, which for it ſelf might not be deſired: becauſe their works, and writings, and doctrine are like to be much blaſted by their own defamations, and do little good to any that

come after: Nay the precious truths and cause of God may be most dangerously wronged and disadvantaged by it; and get such a blot and dishonour by *their* dishonour, that any that shall seek the promoting of it hereafter may be greatly hindered and disadvantaged thereby: For it will seem enough to cast off such a doctrine for ever, that by the dishonour of the maintainers it was once dishonourable and rejected as an error. And doubtless some things have been thus made Heresies, and so will be long rejected as Heresies in many parts of the Christian world, because they were once called by that name; and that was because the Person that did own them had some such dishonour or disadvantage as left his doctrine open to this reproach. And therefore you may here see what a Potent instrument Reputation is in the Devils hand, to do his work; and what abundance of advantage he gets by defaming Gods servants. Principally by this means did he long keep the world from the entertainment of the Gospel, the servants of Christ being contemptible in their eyes, and the preaching of the cross but foolishness to them. By this means did the Pharisees hinder the Jews from believing in Christ: And by this means is Heathenism, Infidelity and Mahometanism continued in possession of most of the world to this day. By this means it is that Popery keeps the common people in thraldom: as the voluminous lyes of *Cochlæus*, *Bolsecus*, and many others concerning *Luther*, *Calvin*, *Zuinglius*, and other of our Reformers and Writers, do fully testifie. And by personal reproaches and dishonours it is that the doctrine of the Reformed Divines is made so odious among the *Lutherans*; and the like instances might be given in others. If now any weighty Christian Verity should be asserted by any Pastor of the Church, in a sounder and a clearer manner, then is commonly known or owned, if the person that doth it, should but fall under any reproach (which he shall be sure of if the Devil can procure it) its two to one but for his sake his doctrine will be stigmatized with the name of error, and so lie buryed for ever, till Divine Omnipotency commands its resurrection. And hence it is that there is not one Instrument that ever God raiseth up

to

to vindicate any truth, or ordinance, or do him any special service, but Satan raiseth up tongues and pens if not hands and swords against him, and an Army of reproachers will presently be on the back of him.

Now in all such cases as these, it is a great duty for any servant of Christ to be very regardful of his Reputation even with Posterity: For his good name may much promote the Truth, as we know the Name of *Austin*, *Calvin*, and many another doth at this day. And if it be our great duty to *extend* our *service* of God as far as we can, to all Countries, and to all posterity, to do them good; then is it our duty to endeavour that a good Reputation should go along with our labours to further the success, or remove impediments. And thus while we are sincere, and intend all for God, we may and must regard our honour; and yet *in* so doing we *Deny our selves*, because we do it not for *our selves* but for God and his Church.

2. And if honour be *given* into us this way, even as we partake of it our selves, as a Means to Gods honour, we must thankfully accept it, esteem it, and rejoyce in it. And therefore it is made the matter of many promises, and spoken of in Scripture as a blessing, Prov. 22. 1. *A good name is rather to be chosen then great riches*] and 10. 7. *The memory of the just is blessed: but the name of the wicked shall rot*] Eccles. 7. 1. *A good name is better then precious ointment*] with many the like.

Thus much I have said to prevent a mis-application of that which followeth; and to help you so to understand me on this point of Honour, as not to run from extream into extream, and to sin by seeking to avoid sin.

But, alas, *this kind* of *seeking* our Honour for God and his Church, and not for our selves, and as our own, I doubt is more rare then the *neglect* of honour. The sin that I dissuade you from, is in these two points. 1. That you do not *Affect and seek* after Extended or surviving Reputation for *your selves*; and out of a *Proud* desire to be still *some body* in the estimation of the world: 2. That if God *deny* you even that honour which in the lawfullest manner you desire, that you *submit* to his pleasure, and take it *patiently*; and in these two respects you must here deny your selves,

Above all others, these sorts of persons following are in danger of this odious Pride, in desiring for themselves an extended and surviving Name. 1. *Princes* and *Soldiers* that have the management of the great affairs of the world; Fain would they be Renowned to Posterity: And hence are their aspiring ambitious designs. For this are their Wars and Conquests, that they may be famous when they are dead as well as while they live: And thus they make their Noble Conquests to be but Murders of the vilest sort, and worse then any Cutthroats and Robbers by the high way, while they intend them but for themselves and their own vain-glory; and better might they seek honour by whoredom, drunkenness, or theft which are far smaller sins: Whereas if their wars had been undertaken for God, and managed according to his Will, they had made them truly honourable and renowned. And from this odious Pride it is, that *Absaloms* Pillars must be erected, and Monuments must be built to perpetuate their names, and tell the world what need they have of means to keep alive their memories, and how destitute they are of nobler means, when Marbles and Monuments must be the great preservers of their fame. Yea it were well if this *Pride* and *selfishness* did not corrupt the noblest of their works; and turn them into deadly sins: if they did not build their Hospitals, Colledges or Churches, and endow them with revenues to perpetuate their own Names, rather then to do good. Though the works themselves are so good and so rare, that I would not cast any dishonour upon them, seeing all that can be said is too little to provoke men to do the like: yet am I bound in duty to tell them, that if *Self* should be the End instead of God, and Pride the cause instead of charity, Hell would be the Reward instead of Heaven: so great a matter it is to have an honest heart and right Intentions in the most excellent and noble works. In so much that a poor man that hath an *heart* to build a Colledge or an Hospital, if he had but Means, shall be Rewarded by God as if he had done it, if God were the End, and Charity the Principle; when a rich man that *doth the work* it self, shall have but a poor and temporary reward, if *self* be the End and *Pride* the Principle.

2. Another

2. Another sort, that are specially in danger of this sin, are, all *Rich men*, who would be the great in the world, and perpetuate their names and memory in their houses, lands and posterity: and therefore they would purchase Towns and Lordships that their Houses may be famous when they are gone. For it seems a kind of life to them if their Greatness do but live in their posterity. Psal. 49. 11, 12. [*Their inward thought is that their houses shall continue for ever, and their dwelling places to all generations: they call their lands after their own names — This their way is their folly: yet their posterity approve their sayings.*] Hence also is that ostentation of Escucheons, and Arms, and of Ancient Gentility or Nobility, and much more such proud and *selfish* vanity.

3. Another sort that are in danger of this sin, are, *Divines and Learned men in all Professions*, who make their Writings but a means to perpetuate their own Names to Posterity. Temptations to this sin may be offered to the best, and too much entertainment they may have with our natures, because of the remnants of selfishness and Pride. But yet they do not prevail with the sanctified so far as to aim more at their own honour then at Gods. The Labours that in themselves are excellent and a blessing to the Church, are lost to him that was the Author of them, if *self* be the End, and Pride the fountain. And exceeding great need have the godliest men to watch their hearts in this particular; for they are very deceitful, and *selfishness* will too often interpose, where nothing but God and publike good is discerned. And now because that the sin is very great and dangerous, I shall here annex a few Considerations, which by opening the evil of it, may help you to abhorr it.

1. These Proud desires of a great and surviving Name, do shew that you lamentably overlook the true eternal honour of the Saints. Must you have Honour? choose that which lieth in the esteem of God: Must you be great and glorious? why you may be so, and God would have you be so; if you will but know where Greatness and Glory is to be had, even in that blessedness that Christ hath purchased. Must you have your greatness and honour perpetuated? why you may have that which will never have an end: And when God hath

set before you such an endless glory, are you looking after a Name among mortal men, to leave behind you on the Earth? Do you think to be saved indeed or not? If you do, what need have you of the smoak of mans applause, when you are with God? What unworthy thoughts have you of heaven, if you think when you are there, you shall have need of mens good thoughts or words on earth? But its a dangerous sign that you are indeed unbelievers, and lay not up your treasure in heaven, when you are so careful to perpetuate your names and shadows here with men. The true relish of Heavenly honour would put you out of love with this.

2. And do you not plainly see in your own *desires* the *vanity* of all these Earthly things, when you are put at *last* to take up with such a *shaddow*, such a *Nothing*, *as* is a *surviving name?* Is this all that the world can do for you? And do you not see here the wonderous deceitfulness of the world, and the foolishness of unsanctified men, that they will thus stick to the world for very *nothing!* when they know that they shall have no more from it, they are contriving for a name when they are dead. Wonderful blindness! that experience, and the approach and thoughts of death, should no more open your eyes: surely if this be all that the world will do for you at the last, you should even renounce it and use it accordingly at the first.

3. You cannot but know that when you are dead and gone, the *Honour* of the world is *none of yours*, nor can it do you any good, any further then it relateth to your eternal blessedness, and your honour is serviceable to the honour of God. What good will it do you to be magnified by men, when you neither know nor feel it? What the better is a Tree or House if men commend it? And for your souls, if they be with God, they will be far above the praise of men.

4. Nay as such a design is a dangerous sign of your Damnation, so I beseech you think, what comfort it will be to your soul in Hell to be extolled and well spoken of on earth? Will you cast away your souls, to leave a Name of renown behind you? And how unsutable will such Honour be to your condition? surely if you be there acquainted with it, you must needs

needs be more tormented, both to remember that you were seeking the fame of the world, instead of the eternal glory, and to consider what a miserable wretch it is that men are praising and magnifying on earth. Ah then you will think with your selves [*Little do the poor inhabitants of the earth know what I am suffering while they are extolling me. Is the applause of mortals suitable to a poor tormented soul? Alas that at one and the same time, men should be extolling me, and Devils tormenting me? How little ease do all their acclamations afford this poor distressed soul!*] How honourable are the names of *Alexander* the Great, and *Cæsar*, and *Aristotle* here on earth! but alas what cause have we to fear that they are lamenting their misery, while we are speaking of their glory!

5. And the sin is much the greater, because it is not a *mischosen means*, but a *mistaken end*, that your souls have fastened on: For it seems your very *hearts* are set upon your Honours, and *deeply* and *desperately* set upon them, when you dare contrive the continuation of them when you are dead. Were it not a matter exceeding dear to you, undoubtedly you durst not lay such a design for it.

6. And consider whether there be not a Love of the deadly sin of Pride, and a final impenitency implyed in this ambition of a surviving name. For you lay a design that is supposed to be executed after death. And as if you desired an eternity of wickedness, because your Pride it self can live nowhere but with your self, you would have it leave those tokens behind it, by which the world may know that you are Proud; and the effects of it you would have perpetuated on earth? And had not the *world* enough of your Pride while you were alive? and had not *you* enough of it? Is this your *Repentance*, that you would leave the *Monuments* of your *Pride* unto Posterity, as if you were affraid there would be no surviving witness against you to condemn you? This is a certain transcendency of sin! The common wicked ones would fain die the death of the Righteous, and wish their last end were like to his: But these men would have their Pride to live for ever; and when they themselves are in another world, they would have the demonstrations of their iniquity survive them.

7. And

7. And I beseech you consider what a fearful thing it is to *die* in contrived beloved sin! when men have none but a death-bed Repentance, we have much cause to fear, lest it be but *fear* that is the life of their Repentance: But when they have not *this much*, but are desirous to leave the monuments of their vice to all Generations, from whence then shall we fetch our hopes of their forgiveness? And O what a power hath Pride in that soul, where the thoughts of Death it self will give no stop to it, but still they are desirous that Pride may overlive them! One would think that the serious thoughts of a grave, much more of our passage into another world, should level all such thoughts of a surviving honour, even in an unsanctified soul! But I much fear lest it be infidelity it self that is the root of all; and that men do not soundly believe an everlasting life with God, which makes them desire to have somewhat like an Immortality here on earth.

8. And consider what a silly immortality you desire. The honour can be no greater then the persons are that honour you, nor no longer. And it is but poor mortals that will magnifie your Names, and what can they add to you? and it will be but a very little while; for it is not long that the world is to continue.

9. And consider what a wickedness is here commonly included. Proud men desire to be thought better then they are, and spoken of accordingly; They limit not mens estimation to the truth of their deserts Otherwise if the best and greatest of you all were thought no *better* or greater then you are, alas, how far would men be from admiring you? what would you be thought but worms and sinners; and such as after all your glory, cannot forbid a crawling worm to feed upon your face or heart? and such as deserve no less then hell; and have many a secret sin that the world was unacquainted with. But it is not a *true*, but *false Esteem* that the Proud desire: They care not how *great*, or how *good*, or how *wise* and *learned* the world and succeeding ages think them: And thus they desire to *cheat* mens *understandings*, and to leave a *false* history of themselves on earth, and to have *all men believe* and *report untruths*, to magnifie men, whose souls, its much to be doubted

doubted are in hell, or if they be not, must needs abhorr such doings. And thus every Proud and *selfish* man would be a *false Historian* and *cheater* of the world.

10. Yea, which is yet the worst of all, *they would continue sacrilegiously to rob the Lord of his honour even when they are dead.* It is an undue honour, which is stoln from God, which they so much seek for (For were it but such as is a useful means to his honour, he would not be offended with them) And when the Saints say [*Not unto us Lord, but to thy name give the glory*] these sinners are not content to rob God of his honour as long as they live, but they would do it even after death. If we had not certainly known the truth of it, we should have thought it an incredible thing, that ever any man should come to that impiety, pride and madness, as to desire to be worshipped as a God when he was dead. Much more, that the *most of the world* should be so far distracted as to do it. And yet so it hath been, and so it is in too great a measure. And truly the wicked and Proud disposition that is predominant in the hearts of all the unsanctified, doth take up no shorter where it hath but hopes of success to actuate it. Not a man of them but would be honoured as Gods when they are dead: Though I know those of them that feel not this much in themselves, will hardly believe it. Consider what an hainous injury this is to God, and to the souls of men, that you should leave your Names as Idols to the world, to entice so many thousand men to sin, and to be a standing enemy to the honour of God, by encroaching on his right, and turning the eye of mens observation and admiration from him to you.

11. Consider also, how that by these desires of earthly honour to your selves, and making this the End of your endeavours, you corrupt abundance of excellent works (materially considered) and turn them into mortal sins. If Princes rule and fight for themselves, I have told you already what they do: but if this were done for God, it would have another *form*, and another *reward*, as it had another End. What a doleful case is it that such excellent works, as alms-deeds, and acts of bounty to Church, or poor, or Commonwealth, in buildings, lands, or any the like works, should be all turned

into sin and death, by such a selfish vain-glorious intent? And that their souls should be suffering for those works that others receive much good by! What a sad case is it, that Historians, Lawyers, Physicians, Philosophers, Linguists, and the Professors of all the Sciences, should undo themselves for ever by those excellent works that edifie the world! Nay what can be more lamentable to think of, then that able and learned Divines themselves should lose their own souls in the studying, and preaching those precious truths, that are saving unto others; and that such excellent writings as remain a standing blessing to the Church should be the Authors mortal sin! And yet so it is, if the renown and immortality of a name on Earth be the End that all this work is done for.

12. Lastly, Consider that if *Honour be good for you*, it is better attained by *minding your duty for the Honour of God, and denying your own Honour*, then by seeking it: For Honour is the shadow that will follow you if you fly from it, and fly from you if you follow it. What Christ here saith of Life, is true of Honour: He that seeketh and saveth it shall lose it, and he that loseth it for Christ shall find it. The greatest Honour is to deny our selves, and our own honour, and to do most for the Honour of God; and to be contented to be nothing that God may be all. For you have his promise, that them that honour him he will honour, but they that despise him shall be lightly esteemed.

THough I have endeavoured by a right limitation and exposition of the foregoing parts of self-denial, to prevent mistakes, and give you those grounds by which objections may be answered, yet the stir that is made in the world about this point, by Papists and many other mistaking Sects, doth perswade me to give a more distinct Resolution of some of the principal doubts that are before us, and therein to shew you that *self-denial* consisteth not in all things that by some are pretended to be parts of it; but that there is a great deal of sin that goes under the name of self-denial among many of these sorts of mistaken persons.

CHAP.

Chap. LI.

Q. Whether Self-denial lie in renouncing Propriety?

Queſt. 1. *Whether doth ſelf-denial require us to renounce Propriety, and to know nothing as our own* (as the Monks among the Papiſts ſwear to do, as part of their ſtate of perfection: and a Book called *The way to the Sabbath of Reſt*, doth teach us.)

Anſw. 1. That there ſhould *be no Propriety* in goods, or eſtate among men, is contrary to the will of God, who hath made men his *Stewards*, and truſted ſeveral perſons with ſeveral *talents* and *forbidden ſtealing*, and commanded men to *labour* that *they may have to give to him that needeth*; *and he that hath this worlds goods and ſeeth his brother have need*, muſt not ſhut *up the bowels of his compaſſion*. It is a ſtanding duty to *give to the poor*; and we ſhall therefore *have the poor always with us* for this exerciſe of our Charity. And he that *hath nothing*, can *give nothing*, nor uſe it for God. Why did *Paul* require them to *give to the diſtreſſed Saints*, *and maintain the Miniſtry*, and *gather for ſuch uſes every firſt day of the week*, if he would have men have nothing to give? This therefore is a conceit that needs nothing but Reaſon and the reading and belief of Scripture to confute it.

2. But as no man is a *Proprietary*, or hath any thing of his *Own* in the ſtrict and Abſolute ſenſe, becauſe all is Gods, and we are but *Stewards*; ſo no man may retain his humane analogical propriety, when God calleth him to give it up: No man may retain any thing from Gods Uſe and ſervice which he hath a propriety in. We have ſo much Propriety as that no man muſt rob us; and ſo much as our works of charity are rewardable, though it be but giving a cup of cold water, which could not be without propriety; for who will reward him that gives that which is none of his own? yea it is made the matter of the laſt judgement [*I was hungry, and ye fed me*; *I was naked, and ye cloathed me*, &c.] which they could not

have done if they had not had food and cloathing to bestow. So that the denial of *propriety* would destroy all exercise of charity in such kinds, and destroy all societies and orderly converse and industry in the world.

But yet when God cals for any thing from us, we must presently obey, and quit all title to it, and resign it freely and gladly to his will.

And 3. There must be so much vigour of charity, and sense of our neighbours wants, as that no man must shut up the bowels of compassion: but as we must love our neighbours as our selves, so must we relieve them as a second *self*; yea and before our selves, if Gods service or honour should require it. If we must *lay down our lives for the brethren*, much more our estates. So that *Levelling Community* is abominable; but *Charitable Community* is a Christian duty, and the great Character of sincere Love to Christ in his members. And therefore in the Primitive Church there was no forbidding of *Propriety*; but there was 1. A resignation of all to God, to signifie that they were contented to forsake all for him, and did prefer Christ and the Kingdom of God before all: and 2. There was so great vigor of true Charity, as that all men voluntarily supplied the wants of the Church and poor, and voluntarily made all things as common, that is, *Common by voluntary Communication for use*, though not *common in primary title*: And so no man took any thing as his Own, when God, and his Churches, and his Brethrens wants did call for it. O that we had more of that Christian Love that should cause a *Charitable Community* which is the true Mean betweed the *Monkish Community*, and the *selfish tenacious propriety*! Levelling hath not destroyed one soul for ten thousand that an inordinate love of Propriety hath destroyed.

CHAP.

Chap. LII.

Q. *Whether it lie in renouncing Marriage ?*

Queſt. 2. *Whether Self-denial conſiſt in the forſwearing or renouncing of Marriage, or the natural uſe of it by thoſe that are marryed ?*

Anſw. To *forbid Marriage* ſimply, is called by the holy Ghoſt *a doctrine of Devils*, 1 Tim. 4. 1, 3. and was one of the hereſies that the Apoſtles were called out to encounter in their own daies. But yet a Married ſtate doth ordinarily (not always) call men off from that free attendance on the ſervice of God without diſtraction which is very deſirable: And therefore thoſe that are capable of doing God any notable ſervice, which Marriage is like to hinder them from, ſhould avoid it, if they can without a greater evil. And therefore the Church did think it for many ages, ſo fit for Miniſters to be ſingle, that they might have the leſs of worldly affairs and cares to call them off from the work of God, and their carnal relations might not hinder them from more publike duties or charitable works. The Papiſts therefore miſtakingly take the *Vow of Chaſtity* to be an entering into a ſtate of Perfection, and ſinfully condemn the Marriage of Prieſts: when the Apoſtle expreſly ſaith [*A Biſhop muſt be blameleſs, the Husband of one Wife—having his children in ſubjection*] 1 Tim. 3. 24. And ſo of Deacons, verſ. 12. And others run into the other extream. But the true Mean is this: 1. Ordinarily Marriage is more *diſtracting* and hindering to us in the ſervice of God then a ſingle life; eſpecially to Miniſters, and ſuch as ſhould wholly addict themſelves to the publike ſervice of the Church. 2. But yet all men are not alike obliged to it or from it. Some may be neceſſitated to it, by the temper of their bodies to avoid a greater evil, even ſin it ſelf; and ſome may have no ſuch neceſſity: ſome may have their worldly eſtate and affairs in ſuch a plight, that they can far better manage them with freedom for Gods ſervice in a married then a ſingle ſtate: but with others it is

not so : and especially with very few Ministers. So that a single or married life is in it self indifferent : but as a means to Gods service, that is a Duty to one that is a sin to another, but because that a single life is more commonly free and fittest for this great end, therefore the Apostle preferreth it as better, because more suitable to the state of the most, (at least in those times) though to *some*, marriage may be a duty. So that every one should impartially enquire, in which state they may do God the greater service, and that they should choose ; not on Popish ground, as if it were *Commended* to that particular person to whom it is not *Commanded*, and were an *Evangelical counsel of perfection*, and to be *vowed* ; but in a prudent ordering of our lives, applying the general rules of Scripture to our several estates. And thus according to the command of Christ, He that can receive this saying, let him.]

Chap. LIII.

Q. *Or in solitude and renouncing secular affairs ?*

Quest. 3. *Whether Self-denial consist in solitude, and avoiding secular affairs, as trades, merchandise, labour*, &c ?

Answ. 1. It is the standing Rule of the Apostle, of all that are able [*That if any man will not work, neither should he eat.*] 2 Thess. 3. 10. and he cals those *disorderly walkers that work not at all*, 2 Thes. 3. 11. and requireth us to have *no company with such*, commanding men, with *quietness to work and eat their own bread*, ver. 12, 14. But yet there are several sorts of Labour : some *labour* with the *body*, which is usually more private, as to the extent (if not the intent) of the benefit : and some *labour* with the *mind*, which is usually more for publike good : as Princes, Judges, Magistrates of all sorts, Lawyers, Physicians, Ministers, *&c.* Now men are to consider whether by the Labour of the *mind* or of the *body* they are like to be more serviceable to God, and which they are fittest for and called

called to; and that they ought to set themselves to, and that in true *self-denial*, and for God. To be *Idle*, is so far from being a part of *self-denial*, that it is a sinful part of flesh-pleasing. And so is it to choose any calling or imployment principally for fleshly ease and accommodation. The Apostles were some Fishermen, and some of other callings, and none of them renounced worldly labour, or affairs, save only so far as they hindered them from the work of God, to which they (and all Ministers) were wholly to addict themselves, as appears, 1 Tim. 4, 15. 2 Tim. 2. 4. To do therefore as many Monks do, to be employed in no calling for the publike good, under pretence of being Religious for themselves, is to be burdens to the Earth, and gross violators of the Laws of God.

Chap. LIV.

Q. *Or in renouncing Publike Offices and Honours ?*

Quest. 4. *Whether Self-denial require men to renounce all publike offices, and honours, and not to be Magistrates, Ministers or the like ?*

Answ. It requireth us not to have such carnal thoughts of these offices, as to look on them only as places of honour, and power, and ease; nor yet to desire them for such carnal ends: Nor yet to thrust our selves upon them without a call, as being the Judges of our own sufficiency. But self-denial is so far from forbidding the offices and imployments themselves, as that it is a great point of self-denial for a man that understandeth them well, to undertake them, if he mean to manage them sincerely and faithfully. For were it not that the sweetness of Gods interest and his acceptance, and the benefits of the Church, our brethren and our souls, did ingratiate these offices and employments to an honest mind, they would be so very burdensom, that flesh and blood would either make them carnal by abuse, or never endure them. And therefore hath God given them an addition of honour to encourage them,

them, and to put an honour on their work, for the furthering of its succeſs. Experience certifieth me that the work of the *Miniſtry* is far more troubleſom to the fleſh, then the bodily labour of a poor artificer or plowman is: ſo that without great ſelf-denial no man will be a Miniſter, that doth not carnally miſtake the function for another thing then indeed it is. And I think I may ſay the like in its degree, by the *Magiſtracy*: Eſpecially by them in higheſt Power, who have the greateſt work. Certain I am, if they faithfully do their duties, they will find more burden to the fleſh and mind, then poor men that have only a family to provide for. Though many ignorant ungodly poor people that ſit at home in peace, and little know the care, and grief, and trouble of their Rulers, do wickedly murmur at their very calling, as if they had nothing ~~nothing~~ but honour, and idleneſs and exceſs, yet if they had tryed and taſted their care and trouble a few months, they would think a private life the eaſier, and confeſs that there is need of *much ſelf-denial* for a man to *accept of Magiſtracy* or *Miniſtry*, that underſtandeth them, and reſolveth to uſe them accordingly.

Moreover, theſe Offices are of neceſſity to the Common good, and eſtabliſhed to that End by God himſelf. And the fifth Commandment requires us to pay our Superiors their honour and obedience: And therefore to imagine that its any part of *ſelf denial* to refuſe the office of Magiſtracy or Miniſtry, is to make it *ſelf-denial* to deſtroy the Church and Commonwealth, and be a cruel enemy to mankind, and to our Countrey, and to rebel againſt the Powers that are ordained of God, and thereby to receive damnation to our ſelves, *Rom.* 13. 1, 2, 3. *Heb.* 13. 17.

But yet this I muſt ſay: that if a worthy perſon ſtand in competition with us, *ſelf-denial* requireth us to prefer them before our ſelves, and to refuſe honours and dignities, when the good of the publike doth not call us to deny our ſelves more in the accepting them.

CHAP.

Chap. LV.

Q. Whether it be a denying our Relations ?

Queſt. 5. *Whether Self-denial conſiſt in denying of Natural or Contracted Relations, as of Father and Mother to Sons and Daughters, of Brothers and Siſters, Husband and Wife, Maſter and Servant, Prince and People, Paſtor and Flock ?*

Anſw. You might as wiſely imagine that ſelf-denial lieth in hating or denying any of Gods Works, even the frame of nature: or in denying food and rayment to our bodies, or in denying our own lives ſo as to cut our throats. For the ſame Law of Nature that made me a man, and requireth me to preſerve my life, did make me a ſon, and require me to love and honour my parents: And it is in the Decalogue, the *firſt commandment with promiſe*, as the Apoſtle calleth it, *Epheſ.* 6. 2. It is frequently and expreſly commanded in Scripture, that children love, honour, obey their parents; and terrible curſes are pronounced on the breakers of theſe Commands, *Ephiſ.* 6. 1. 4. & 5. 22, 25. *Coloſ.* 3. 20, 21, 22. & 4. 1. *Exod.* 21 17. *Levit.* 20. 9. *Deuteron.* 21. 18, 19. & 27. 16. *Proverbs* 30. 17. *Mat.* 15. 4. & 19. 19. And if children were not bound to parents, then parents ſhould not be bound to educate children, and then they would be expoſed to miſery and periſh. One would think that there ſhould never ſuch a ſect have riſen up, that ſhould be worſe then the very brutes, who by the inſtinct of nature love their young ones, and their dams. But the Spirit foretold us, that which is come to paſs, that in the laſt and perilous times, there ſhould be men that are *diſobedient* to *parents without natural affection*, 2 Tim. 3. 3.

And for *contracted Relations*, they are the expreſs inſtitution of God, ſo frequently owned by him in Scripture, and the duties of them ſo frequently commanded, that I will not trouble you with the recital of the paſſages. And as for the

Adversaries objections, they are frivolous. The meaning of the Apostles words, [*that we know no man after the flesh*] I have told you before : The words of Christ to his Mother, Joh. 2.4. [*Woman, what have I to do with thee ?*] which they alledge, are nothing for their wicked cause ; they being no more but Christs due Reprehension of his Mothers mistake, who would prescribe him the time and manner of doing Miracles, and have him do them in a way of ostentation, which things did not belong to her, but to the Spirit of God, and the Lord himself. And whereas they alledge that Text , Luke 14. 26. *that father, mother, brother, sisters,* &c. *are to be hated, for Christ* ; I answer, Even as our *own lives* are to be *hated*, which are also numbred with them : that is, They must be all forsaken rather then Christ should be forsaken , and therefore loved less then he, and but for his sake. If therefore this Text require you not at all to cut your own throats, or some way kill your selves, then it doth not require you to withdraw your due affections from Natural or Contracted Relations. I must crave the Readers pardon that I trouble him with confuting such unnatural opinions, and desire him to believe that it is not before I am urged to it by the arguments of some deluded souls that are not unlikely to do hurt by them with some.

Chap. LVI.

Q. Or Relieving Strangers before Kindred ?

Quest. 6. *Whether self-denial require that we should relieve godly strangers, before our natural Kindred, especially that are ungodly ? Or that we love them better ?*

Answ. 1. Where our Natural Kindred are as holy and as needy as others, there is a double obligation on us, both natural and spiritual, to love and relieve them. 2. Where they they are *as Holy* as others, but *less needy*, there may lie a double obligation on us, to *love them*, and yet not to give to them.

3. If

3. If they be *more needy*, or *as needy* as others, though withal they be *ungodly*, we are not thereby excused from natural affections or charitable relief. 4. We must distinguish between *children*, or such *kindred as nature* calleth upon our care for provision, and *such kindred* as are by nature cast upon *others*. If parents were not obliged to relieve and provide for their own children, they would be exposed to misery, and man should be more unnatural then brutes. So that even when by ungodliness, they are less amiable then others, yet God hath bound men to provide for them more. 5. *Natural love* and *spiritual* are much different; you may have a stronger *Natural Love* to an *ungodly child*, then to a *Godly stranger*; but you must have a *spiritual Love* to that *Godly stranger*, more then to your *child*; And that *spiritual Love* must be (at least as to the Rational and Estimative part) much greater then the other *Natural Love*: And yet you may be bound to *Give* more, where you are not bound to *Love* more. For it is not *Love* only that is the cause of *giving*; but we are Gods Stewards, and must dispose of what we have as he prescribeth us: and his standing Law of Nature for the preservation of mankind, is, that parents take care of their children, as such.

6. The will and service of God, being it that should dispose of all that we have, we must in all such doubts look to these two things for our direction: First to the particular Precepts of the Word: and there we find the fore-said duty of parents expressed, and withall the duty of relieving all that are needy to our power: Secondly to the General Precept: and there we find, that we must honour God with our substance, and lay out all our talents to his service. And so the duty lieth plain before us. If you have a child that is wicked, yet as parents provide him his daily bread; and leave him enough for dayly bread when you die. But more he should not have from me: but the rest (had I ten thousand pound a year) I would lay out that way that my conscience told me may be most serviceable to God. For 1. I am not bound to strengthen an enemy of Christ, and enable him to do the greater mischief. 2. Nor to cast, away the mercies of God: 3. If the Law required the parents to cause such a rebelli-

ons son to be put to death, *Deut.* 21. 18. then surely to provide him daily bread, is now as much as a parent is obliged to. And if it be an expres's Command, *that he that will not labour shall not eat*, 2 Thes. 3. 10. such *useless members* forfeiting their very *sustenance*, then surely he that is *such or worse*, speeds fair if you leave him food and rayment. 4. And the great command of *doing all to Gods Glory*, and *serving him with our substance*, will not be obeyed, if you leave your riches and estates in the hands of such persons meerly because they are your Children. No doubt but that is a *selfish* and unconscionable course, and the thing that sets up the ungodly to disturbe the Church, and Lord it over the world, while parents furnish them with riches to do the Devil eminent service with.

Object. *But who knows but God may convert them?* *Answ.* You cannot guide your actions by things unknown. You have no promise of their conversion; nor much *probability*, when they have frustrated all your counsails and means of their good education; and grace is supernatural: and therefore you must proceed upon grounds that are known.

And for *remoter Kindred*, if they may be as serviceable to God with what I give them as others, nature teacheth me to preferr them before others: but Otherwise Grace teacheth me, both to love a godly stranger better then ungodly kindred, and to lay out all that I have as may be most serviceable to God.

Chap. LVII.

Q. *How we must love our Neighbours as our selves.*

Quest. 7. *How is it that Self-denial requireth us to love our neighbour as our selves: Is it with the same degree of Love?*

Answ. I answered this on the by, before: Briefly, 1. The chief part of the precept is Negative: thus. q. d. [*Set not up thy self against the welfare of thy neighbour: Draw not from him,*

or

or covet not that which is his to thy self, and confine not thy love and care to thy self] 2. And it comprehendeth this positive, and that as to the *kind* of Love, we should love both our selves and neighbours as *means to God*, and for the interest of God; and in that respect there is an equality: we must *appretiative* or estimatively love a better and more serviceable man that hath more of Gods Spirit in him, *above* our selves: and an equal person equally with our selves, with this *Rational* Love, which intendeth all for God. 3. But *Natural Love* which is put into man for self-preservation will be stronger to *self* then to another, and alloweth us *cæteris paribus* to preferr, and first, preserve and provide for our selves. And in this regard, our *neighbour* must be loved but as a *second self*, or next our selves. 4. But this *Natural Love* in the exercise of it, at least in imperate acts, is to be *subservient* to our *Rational spiritual Love*, and to be overmastered by it. And therefore it is that as *Reason* teacheth an Heathen to preferr his *Country* before his *life*, (though the instinct of Nature incline us more to life), so *faith* teacheth a Christian much more, to prefer *Gods honour*, and the *Gospel*, *Church*, *Commonwealth*, and his *neighbours good* when it more conduceth to these ends, then his own, before himself, his liberty or life.

Chap. LVIII.

Q. *Is Self-revenge and Penance Self-denial?*

Quest. 8. *Whether Self-denial require us after sin, to use vindictive penance or punishment of the flesh, by fasting, watching, going bare-foot, lying hard, wearing hair-cloth, or to do this ordinarily? as some of the Papists, Monks, and Fryars do?*

Answ. The easiness of of this case may allow a brief decision. 1. The Body must be so far afflicted, as is needful to humble it, and subdue it to the spirit, and tames its rebellion, and fit it for the service of God. 2. The exercise of a holy revenge on

our ſelves may be a lower end, ſubſervient to this. 3. It muſt alſo be ſo far humbled as is neceſſary to expreſs Repentance to the Church when Abſolution is expected upon publike Repentance. 4. As alſo to concur with the ſoul in ſecret or open humiliation.

But 1. He that ſhall think that whippings, or ſackcloth, or going bare-foot or other ſelf-puniſhing, are of themſelves good works, and meritorious with God, or ſatisfie his Juſtice, or are a ſtate of perfection, doth offer God a hainous ſin, under the name and conceit of a good work. 2. And he that ſhall by ſuch ſelf-afflicting unfit his Body for the ſervice of God, yea that doth not cheriſh it ſo far as is neceſſary to fit it for duty, is guilty of ſelf-murder, and defrauding God of his ſervice, and abuſing his creature, and depriving others of the help we owe them: ſo that in one word, the *Body muſt be ſo uſed as may beſt fit it for Gods ſervice.* And to think that ſelf-afflicting is a good work, meerly as it is penalty or ſuffering to the body, or that we may go further herein, is to think 1. That we ſhould uſe our Body worſe then our beaſt; for we will no further afflict *him* then is neceſſary to tame him, or ſerve our ſelves by him, and not to diſable him for ſervice. 2. And it will teach men to kill themſelves: for that is a greater penalty to the body then whipping or faſting. 3. And it is an offering God a ſacrifice of cruelty and robbery, which we commit againſt himſelf and man.

But I muſt needs add that though ſome Fryars and Melancholy people are apt to go too far in this, aud pine their bodies or miſuſe them with conceits of merit and ſatisfaction; yet almoſt all the common people rnn into the contrary extream, and pamper and pleaſe their fleſh, to the diſpleaſing of God, and the ruine of their ſouls. And I know but few that have need to be reſtrained from afflicting or taking down the fleſh too much.

CHAP.

CHAP. LIX.

Q. *Is Self-denial to be without Passion?*

Quest. 9. *WHether Self-denial consist in the laying by of all Passions, and bringing the soul to an impassionate serenity?*

Answ. The Stoicks and some Behmenists think so: But so doth not God or any well informed man. For 1. God would not have made the Affections in vain: It is not the Passions, but the disorder of them that is sinful, or the fruit of sin. 2. We are commanded to exercise all the Affections or Passions for God, and on other sutable objects. We must *Love* God with all the heart, and soul, and might, which is not without affection or or passion. We must *Love* his servants, his Church, his Word, his wayes: We must *fear* him above them that can kill us: we must *hunger and thirst* after his righteousness, and *pant* after him as the Hart doth after the Water-brooks: We must be *angry* and sin not. A *zeal* for God is the life of our Graces: we must *always be zealous in a good matter*; *fervent in Spirit, serving the Lord.* We must *hate evil*, and *sorrow for it*, when we are guilty, and *grieve* under the sense of our miscarriages, and Gods displeasure. And all these (expresly commanded in the Word) are holy *Affections* or *Passions* of the soul.

3. Yea it is the Work of the Holy Ghost to sanctifie all these Passions that they may be used for God; and they are called by the names of the several graces of the Spirit. And it is not *Passion*, but *disordered Passion* that must be denied.

CHAP.

Chap. LX.

Q. *How far must we deny our own Reason?*

Quest. 10. *HOw far must we deny our own Reason?*

Answ. 1. We must not *be unreasonable*, nor *live unreasonably*, nor *believe unreasonably*, nor *love*, or *choose*, or let out any affection unreasonably. We are commanded to be ready to give a *reason of our hopes*. It is our *Rational* faculty that proveth us men, and is essential to us: And without it we can neither understand the things of God or man: For how should we understand without an understanding?

But yet Reason must thus far be denied. 1. We must not think highlyer of our Reason then it deserves either in it self, or as compared to others. 2. We must not satisfie its curiosity in prying into unrevealed things. 3. Nor must we satisfie or suffer its presumption, in judging our Brethren, or censuring mens hearts or wayes uncharitably. 4. Nor must we endure it to rise up against the Word or wayes of God, or contradict or quarrel with Divine Revelations, though we cannot see the particular Evidence or Reason of Each Truth, nor reconcile them together in our apprehensions. Though we may not take any thing to be the Word of God without Reason; yet when we have Reason to take it to be his Word, we must believe and submit to all that is in it, without any more Reason for our belief. For the formal Reason of our belief, is, because God is true that did reveal this Word: And we have the greatest Reason in the world to believe all that he revealeth.

Chap. LXI.

Q. *Must we be content with afflictions, permitted sin,* &c ?

Quest. 11. *IF Self-denial require us to Content our souls in the Will of God, then whether must we be content with his afflictions, or permission of sin, or the Churches sufferings; and* 1. *How will this stand with our due sense of Gods displeasure and chastisements.* 2. *And with our Praying against them.* 3. *And our use of means for their removal ?*

Answ. 1. The *Will of God* is one thing, and the *Hurt* which he willeth us is another: and the *Good End for* which he willeth it, is a third. The afflicting *Will* of God is good, and must be Loved as good: and the *End and Benefit* of Chastisement is good and must be loved: But the *hurt* as hurt must not be Loved. It is not Gods *Will* that we must resist, or seek to change; nor yet is it the End or Benefit of the chastisement; but only the *hurt*, which our folly hath made a suitable means. And we may not seek to remove this *hurt*, till the *effect* be procured, or on terms that may consist with the *End* of it. And this is not against the Will of God, that when the good is attained, the Affliction be removed.

2. And you must distinguish between his *Pleased, and Displeased Will*: his complacency and acceptance, and his Displacency and Rejecting Will. Every act of Gods Will must be approved and loved as Good in God; but it is not every one that we may Rest and Rejoyce in as Good to us, and as our felicity. We must be grieved for Gods Displeasure, and yet Love even that holy will that is displeased with us; and we must be sensible of Gods judgements, and yet Love the Will that doth inflict them. But it is only the *Love* of God and *Pleasure* of his *Will to us*, that can be the *Rest* and *felicity* of our souls.

3. Some acts of Gods Will are about the *Means*, and have a tendency to a further end; and some are about the *End* it self. His *Commanding Will* we must *Love and obey*: his *forbidding Will*

must have the same affections: his *threatning Will* we must *love and fear*; his *Rewarding Will* we must *Love and Rejoyce in*: His *full Accepting Will*, that is, *his Love and Complacency* in us, we must *Rest and Delight our souls in for ever.* And thus we must comply with the Will of God.

Chap. LXII.

Q. *May God be finally Loved as our Felicity and Portion?*

Quest. 12. *YOU tell us that we must seek our selves but as Means to God: How then may we make our salvation our End; or desire the fruition of God, when fruition is for our selves, of somewhat that may make us happy? Doth he not desire God as a Means for himself as the End, that desireth him as his Portion, Treasure, Refuge, and Felicity?*

Answ. There are such abundance of abstruse Philosophical Controversies *de anima & fine* that stand here in the way, that I must only decide this briefly and imperfectly for vulgar capacities. Schoolmen and other Philosophers are not so much as agreed what a *final Cause* is. But this much briefly may give some degree of satisfaction to the Moderate. 1. No fleshly Profits, Pleasures, or Honours must be made our End. This we are agreed on. 2. The Ultimate End of all the Saints, is an End that is suitable to the Nature of Love: and that is, perfectly to Love God, and Please him, and serve him, and to be perfectly beloved of him, and behold his glory. So that it is not an *End* of *self-love*, or *Love of Concupiscence*, or for our Commodity only; but it is the *End* of the *Love of friendship*: Now all *Love of friendship* doth take in both the *party Loving*, and the *party beloved* into the *End*: For the End is a *perfect Union* of both, according to their capacities. And it being *Intentio amantis*, the *End of Love*, both *God and our selves* must be comprehended in it, as the parties to be *united*; and so it is both *for him, and for our selves.*

3. But

3. But yet though *both parties* as *united* be comprized in the *End*, it is not *equally*, but with great *inequality*. For 1. *God* being *Infinite Goodneſs it ſelf*, muſt *appreciativè* in eſtimation and affection, be preferred exceedingly before *our ſelves*; ſo that in deſiring this *bleſſed Union*, we muſt *more* deſire it to *Pleaſe and Praiſe him*, and give him his due, for which he Created, Redeemed, and Glorifieth us, then to be *our ſelves happy* in him. 2. And God being not a *meer friend*, but our *Abſolute Lord* of *Infinite Power and Glory*, it muſt be more in our *Intention* to *bring* to him eternally, then to *receive* from him; (though both muſt be comprized:) For *Receiving* is *for our ſelves*, further then we intend it for *Returns*; but *Returning* is for God; Not to *add to his bleſſedneſs*; but to *Pleaſe his Will, and give him his own*; For he *made all things for himſelf*. And ſo that in *union with him* we may *give him his own* in *fulleſt love and Praiſe, and ſervice*, and *thus pleaſe him*, muſt be the higheſt part of our *Intention*, about our *own felicity in enjoying him*.

So that you may ſee, that *Self-denial* teacheth no man to ask, [*Whether he could be content to be damned for Chriſt*]? For this is contrary to our propounded *End*, in the *whole*. For a *damned* man hath *no union* of Love with God, and giveth him not his own in Love or Praiſes.

Object. *What ſay you then by the wiſhes of* Moſes *and* Paul? *Anſw.* 1. The ſaying of *Moſes* is very plain, *Exod.* 32. 32. He doth not deſire that his ſoul might be made a ranſom for *Iſrael*, but that if God would not pardon them, but deſtroy them and caſt them off, he would blot out *Moſes* name from his book, that is, from among the number of the living; ſo that his ſaying is no other then ſuch as *Elias* or *Jonas* was [*What good will my life do me, if I live to ſee thy people caſt off, and all thy wonders for them buryed? therefore either let them live in thy ſight or kill me with them*] This is the plain meaning of *Moſes* requeſt.

And for *Pauls*, the difficulty is ſomewhat greater: 1. Some think that *Paul* meaneth (*Rom.* 9. 3.) that he once wiſhed himſelf to be no Chriſtian in the dayes of his ignorance, and all through his Zeal for the Jewiſh Nation. But this is improbable. 2. Some think that he meaneth only, I could wiſh to be given up to death for them, as the accurſed under the Law.

3. Some think he meaneth only, I could wish my self yet unconverted to Christ, so they were converted.

4. Some think, the meaning is, [*I could wish my self cast out of the Church*, and *given up to Satan for any bodily suffering*.

5. Some say it is only to have his salvation deferred.

6. And some that it is damnation for a time.

But 7. The plain meaning seemeth to be this; [*so great is my Love to my Countrymen the Jews, that if it were offered to my choice whether they or I without them should enjoy Christ; I would yield to be cast out of his sight for ever, rather then they should*] where mark; 1. That it is not a *wish that it were so*: for he knew that this was no means to promote their salvation: but its a discovery of his affection that *would* wish or choose this *if it were* a means to that End. 2. And it is not the *sin of not Loving Christ* that he would choose, but only the *misery of being deprived of his blessed presence*. 3. And the Reasons of this his choice are these two conjunct; 1. Because the souls of so many thousands is in impartial Reason more to be valued then the soul of one; 2. And Principally because by the conversion and salvation of a whole Nation God may be more honoured and served then by one.

And note farther, 1. That this is not set as a mark for every Christian to try the truth of his Love by: 2. But yet no doubt but it is a duty and degree of Grace that every one should aim at. For 1. We see among Heathens that nature it self teacheth them that a man should lay down his life for his Countrey; because a Countrey is better then a man. And proportionably, Reason tels us that the salvation of a Countrey being a greater good then of any one, it should be more preferred: And Self-love goeth against plain Reason when it contradicteth this. What mans Reason doth not tell him that it were *better he should die*, then the *world should be destroyed*, or the Sun turned into darkness; yea or that one Church or Countrey perish? And so of salvation.

2. And it is agreeable to the nature of Love to desire that most that most Pleaseth him whom we Love: and therefore to desire rather that God may have multitudes then one, and be served and Praised by them. So much about the Matter of self-denial.

III. I Have finished the two first things which I promised you under the use of Exhortation, *viz.* the *trial* of your *self-denial*, and the particulars in which it consisteth, and must be exercised; & there I have shewed you 1. In what respects *self* must be denied, 2. What that *selfishness* is that must be denied, as to the inward Disposition; and 3. What is that objective *self-interest* that must be denied, which consisteth in so many Particulars that I cannot undertake to enumerate all: but I have mentioned twenty Particulars under the general head of of *Pleasure*, and ten under the general Head of *Honour*, and have referred you to another Treatise for that which consisteth in worldly *profits*. And now I come to the *third* part of my work, which is to shew you a little more fully the Greatness of the sin of *selfishness*, and give you thence such moving reasons as may conduce to the cure of it: which are these that follow.

p. 108. – 228.
p. 229. – 266.

Chap. LXIII.

Motives : 1. Selfishness the grand Idolatry of the world.

1. *Selfishness is the grand Idolatry of the world, and self the worlds Idol*, as I have told you before. It usurpeth the Place of God himself in mens Judgements, wills, affections and endeavours. It was the work of the ten Discoveries in the Beginning of the Book to demonstrate this: and therefore I shall say but little more. But *self-denial* destroyeth the worlds great Idol, and giveth God his own again. The *selfish* lean most to their own understandings: but the *self-denying* trust the Wisdom of God. The *selfish* are careful principally for themselves, and their own felicity, even a terrene and carnal kind of felicity: But the *self-denying* are principally careful how they may Please and Honour God, and promote the welfare of his Church, and in this way attain the spiritual

everlasting felicity of the Saints. The *selfish* must have their own humors pleased, and their own wills accomplished, and their own desires granted: But the *self-denying* do slay their own carnal wils, desires, and conceits, and lay them dead at the feet of Christ, that his will alone may be exalted. The *selfish* would have all men Love them, admire them, and commend them. But the *self-denying* would have all men to Love, Admire, and Glorifie the Lord, above himself and all the world. The selfish can bear with Gods enemies, but not with their *Own*: and they can suffer men to wrong God, and sin against him, more patiently then they can suffer them to wrong themselves. But it is contrary with the *self-denying*: A wrong to God and his Church seemeth far greater to them then a wrong against themselves. In a word, the *selfish* intend themselves, and live to themselves, and the *self-denying* intend God, and live to him, in the course of their lives. And therefore when the *selfish* are troubled about many things, the *self-denying* are minding the One thing Necessary: And when the *selfish* are seeking to know what is good or evil to their flesh; the *self-denying* are seeking to Please the Lord, and desire to know nothing but him in Christ crucified; and they could part with all the knowledge of the creatures, as useful to themselves, if they could but know more of God in Christ. The *selfish* would be in his own hands, at his own dispose and government; and the *self-denying* would be in the hands of God, and at his dispose and Government.

And doubtless, the very state of mans Apostacy did lie in turning from God to *self*, and to the creature for *self*: so that he now studyeth, and useth, and loveth the Creature but for *himself*: And so he would have himself, and all as far out of the hands of God in his own, as possibly he can. I gave you my thoughts in the beginning, that this was the meaning of mans knowing Good and Evil by the Fall: And since I wrote that, I meet with the same Exposition in *Damascene, de Orthodox. fid. li.* 11. *c.* 11. *p.* (*mihi*) 113. part of whose words I shall here translate [In the midst of Paradise, God planted the Tree of Life, and the Tree of Knowledge: And the Tree of Knowledge was for the tryal, and proof and the exercise of

of mans obedience and disobedience. And therefore it is called the Tree of Knowledge of good and evil: Or because it gave man a power to Know his Own Nature; which indeed to the perfect is good, but to the infirm is evil; and to them that are yet prone to concupiscence, as strong meats to the weak and those that need milk. For the Lord that created us, would not have us careful and troubled about many things, nor to become Contrivers and Providers for our own lives: into which it was that *Adam* fell. For when he had eaten, he knew that he was naked, and made himself an apron of fig-leaves to cover his nakedness. But before, both *Adam* and *Eve* were naked and not ashamed. And God would have had us insensible of (or not to suffer by) such things: For this is but an insensibility or impassibility. But we had One work only to do without vexation and care, which is the work of Angels, unweariedly and continually to praise our Creator, and to delight in the contemplation of him, and to cast all our care on him, as he taught us by the Prophet *David*, saying Cast thy care on the Lord, and he shall nourish thee; and the Lord taught his own Disciples in the Gospel, Take no care what you shall eat, nor wherewith you shall be cloathed; and again, Seek the first the Kingdom of God and his Righteousness, and these things shall be added to you; and to *Martha*: *Martha*, thou art careful and troubled about many things, but one thing is needful: *Mary* hath chosen the best part which shall not be taken from her;] that is, to sit at his feet, and hear his word; and this is the tree of Life—] So far *Damascene*, who you see driveth at the same sense, though it be not clearly and fully expresst by him.

And as man by his Fall, desired to know what was good and evil for himself, that is, to his own Nature, for his daily provision and safety, that he might be able to choose for himself, and not trust himself wholly on the Provision of God; so accordingly God in judgement hath given him over to himself according to his desire, of which more anon.

And accordingly our Restauration from this lapsed state, consisteth in retiring from our selves to God; and giving up to him again those minds, those thoughts, those wils, those af-

affections that have been all this while detained from him, and mis-imployed by *self*; Down then with this Idol and set up God. Did you *make* your *selves ?* or *redeem* your selves? or do you sustain your selves, or are you sufficient for your selves? Let him that doth all this for you be acknowledged to have the only Title to you; And consider what an odious crime it is for such worms to exalt themselves as Gods, and so deny the Lord to be their God.

Chap. LXIV.

Enemy to all Morality : Faith : Prayer : Obedience.

2. Moreover, this *Self* is the *Enemy* as of God himself, so also of *all the frame of Morality* : *Of Every Article of your Belief*, *and Every Petition in the Lords Prayer*, *and of every one of the ten Commandments*, *and of the whole Word of God.*

1. For your Belief, it advanceth your own Reason against it, as to the Truth of it : so that you cannot discern these things of God, because they are spiritually discerned. It shutteth up your understandings against the Meaning of it; so that when you know the Grammatical sense of the words, you know not half the meaning yet for all that. The words are written *to* signifie the *spiritual apprehensions and affections* which the holy inditers had of the matter signified by them; And till you come by the help of those words to have the *same impress upon your souls*, the *same apprehensions and affections* which the *inditers* had, and intended to express by them, you have not the perfect understanding of the Scriptures; And therefore while you are *wholly* without *their spiritual Apprehensions and Affections*, you do not so much as *sincerely* or *truly* understand them; however you may be able to speak as good Grammarians, and true Expositors in the explaining of them to others. And also selfishness in the Will doth make you distrelish the Doctrine which you should believe, because that being Practical, either the Doctrine, or its consequence, or the

the Practice that it puts you on is against your carnal self and interest.

2. And for Prayer, I might easily shew you, that *self* contradicteth all the parts of it. You should first Pray that the *Name of God may be Hallowed*, making his Glory the End of your desires: But self must be its *Own End*, and seek the Honour of its *Own Name*, and less regardeth the *Hallowing* of *Gods*.

You must pray that *the Kingdom of God may come*: But this Kingdom treadeth down *self* as an enemy, and therefore no marvel if *self* be unwilling of it. Would you be deposed, and subjected to a spiritual government, and do nothing nor have nothing but at the pleasure of Christ? The Reign of *self* is contrary to his reign.

You must pray that the *Will of God may be done*. But *self* hath a Will that is contrary to Gods Will; and every carnal man would be a Lawgiver to himself, and unto others, and had rather have his *Own* will done, then Gods. Or else whence come all the sins of your lives, which are nothing but the doing of your own wils, and the not doing the Will of God!

You must pray *each day for your daily bread*, as children that live not on their own provision, but on their Fathers love and bounty, and have their address to him for all that they want, desiring but such supplies as are necessary or useful to them for his service. But *Self* desireth more then *daily bread*, and desireth it not so much to strengthen you for Gods service, as to delight and gratifie the flesh; and had rather have its stock in its own possession, then daily to fetch it as you use it from God.

You must Pray daily *for the forgivenesse of your sins*, as people that are grieved for them, and weary of them, and hate them, and are sensible of the want and worth of pardon, and of the abundant Grace of Christ that purchased it, and the preciousness of the Gospel-promises that conveigh it, and of your own Unworthiness by reason of this sin. But *Self* is not easily so far abased as to be heavy-laden, and sick of sin; nor is it easily drawn to value Grace, or feel how much you are unworthy of it, or need it; nor easily driven to renouuce all sufficiency

and conceits of a Righteousness of your own, and wholly to go out of your selves to Christ for life: *Self* cannot spare sin: for it is its darling and play-fellow, its food, its recreation and its life.

You must daily pray to be saved *from temptation, and delivered from Evil*; even the Evil of sin, as *well* as *of* punishment. But *self* doth Love the sin, and therefore cannot long to be delivered from it, and therefore Loveth the temptation that leadeth to it, and indeed is a continual tempter to it self. Would the Covetous worldling be delivered from his worldliness? Would the Ambitious Proud person be delivered from his Pride or Honours? Or the sensual person from his sensual delights? No, they do not Love the Preacher or people that are against them in these ways: nor the holy *self-denial* that is contrary to them; nor the Scripture that condemneth them; nor indeed the Lord himself that forbids them, and is the author of all these Laws and holy ways which they abhorr. So that you see how *self* is an enemy to every Petition in the Lords Prayer.

3. And it is a violation of all the ten Commandments. The first and second it is most directly against, and is the very thing forbidden in them: and all the rest it is against consequentially, and is the virtual breach of them, as disposing and drawing the soul thereunto.

The two Tables have two Great Commands, which are the sum of the whole Law, and all the other Commandments are consequents or particulars from these. The sume of the first Table is [*Thou shalt Love the Lord thy God with all thy heart*] or [*above all*] This is the *first Commandment* [*Thou shalt have none other Gods before me*] which is put first as being the *Fundamental Law*, commanding *subjection it self* to the *soveraign Power* of God, which necessarily goes before all *actual obedience* to particular precepts. But *self* is directly against this, and sets up man as a God to himself: And all the unsanctified Love themselves better then God, and therefore cannot Love him above all.

And therefore neither second, third or fourth command can be sincerely kept by such: For when *self* is set up, and God de-

denied, in ſtead of the right worſhipping of God, they are worſhipping themſelves, or ſuiting Gods worſhip to the conceit and will of *ſelf*. Inſtead of the Reverent uſe of his name, they are ſetting up their own names, and will venture on the groſſeſt abuſe of Gods name, rather then *ſelf* ſhall ſuffer or be croſſed. And inſtead of hallowing the Lords day, they devote both that and every day to themſelves.

The Sum of the ſecond Table is, *Thou ſhalt love thy neighbour as thy ſelf*] and this is the meaning of the tenth Commandment, which forbiddeth us to *covet* any thing from him to our ſelves: that is, that we ſet not up *ſelf* and its intereſt againſt our neighbour and his good; and be not like a bruiſed or inflamed part of the body, that draweth the blood or humors to it ſelf, or like a Wen or other Tumor, that is ſucking from the body for its own nutrition: ſo that it is but plainly this [*Be not ſelfiſh, or drawing, or deſiring any thing to thy ſelf, which is not thy due, but belongeth to another: but let Love run by even proportions, between thy neighbour and thy ſelf, in order to God and the publike good.*] And this Commandment brings up the rear, that it may ſummarily comprehend and gather up all other particulars that be not inſtanced in, in the foregoing Commandments. Now *ſelfiſhneſs* being the very ſin that is here forbidden, I need to ſay no more to tell you that *ſelf* is the breaker of this Law.

Next to this ſummary concluding Precept, the greateſt in the ſecond Table (if not one of the firſt) is the fifth Commandment; which requireth the preſervation of Relations and Societies, and the duties of thoſe Relations, eſpecially of inferiors to ſuperiors for the Honour of God and the Common good. And this is ſet before the reſt, becauſe the publike good is to be preferred to the perſonal good of any; and Magiſtrates and Superiors being Gods Officers, and for the Publike good, are to be preferred before the ſubjects. But what an enemy *ſelfiſhneſs* is to this Commandment, I intend anon to ſhew you diſtinctly, and therefore now paſs it by.

And for the following Commandments, who ever murdered another but out of ſome inordinate reſpect to himſelf, either to remove that other out of the way of his *ſelfiſh Ends*: or to be

revenged on him for depriving *self* of profit, or honour, or something that it would have had, or in some way or other to attain your *Own* Ends by anothers blood ?

And what is it but the satisfaction of your Own filthy lusts, that causeth Adultery and all uncleanness? And what is it but the furnishing and providing for *self* that provoketh any man to Rob another ? And what it is but some *selfish* End that causeth any man to pervert Justice, or slander, or bear false witness against his neighbour? so that nothing is more plain then that *selfishness* is all sin and villany against God and man, comprized in one word.

And therefore you need not ask me, which Commandment it is that doth forbid it : For it is forbidden in every one of the ten Commandments. The first condemneth *self* as it is the Idol set up, and Loved, trusted, and served before God : the second condemneth it as the Enemy of his worship ; and the third condemneth it as the Prophaner of his Name ; and the fourth, as the Prophaner of his Hallowed time : The second Table in the ten Commandments condemneth *self* as it is the Tumor and gulf that is contrary to the Love of our neighbour, and would draw all to it self. The fifth Commandment condemneth it as the Enemy of Authority and Society : the sixth as the Enemy to our Neighbors life ; the seventh, eighth, and ninth condemn it as the enemy to our neighbours chastity, Estates, and Cause, or Name.

So that if you see any mischief done in Persons, Families, Towns, Countries, Courts, Armies, or anywhere in the world, you need not send out Hue and Cry to find out and apprehend the actor : It is *selfishness* that is the author of all. If the poor be oppressed by the rich, and their lives made almost like the life of a labouring Ox or Horse, till the Cry of the oppressed reach to heaven, who is it that doth all this, but *self* ? The Landlords and rich men must Rule and be served by them. I warrant you they would not do thus by themselves.

If the poor be discontented and murmur at their condition, and steal from others, who is it that is the cause of this but *self* ? If *anther* were in poverty, they would not murmur nor steal for *him*.

It

It is *selfishness* that blemisheth Judges, and Justices and Officers with the stains of partiality, avarice aud injustice : It is this that disturbeth the peace of nations ; that will not let Princes Rule for God, and consequently, overthrows their thrones : that will not let subjects Obey them in the Lord, but lets in wars and miseries upon them : that sets the Nations together by the ears, and so continueth them : yea it is self that will not let neighbours live together in Peace : that provoketh people to disobey their Teachers, and Teachers to be man-pleasers, and neglect the people ; that will not let Masters and Servants, Parents and Children, Husband and Wife, live peaceably and lovingly one with other ; It is the common make-bate and troubler of the world.

Nay it is *self* that causeth most of the new opinions and practises in Religion: that sets up Popery, and most other sects; and causeth the Pastors to contend for superiority to the troubling of the Church after all the plain prohibitions of Christ.

In a word, selfishness is the grand enemy of God and man ; the Disease of Depraved lapsed nature : the very heart of Original sin, and the old man ; the root of all the Iniquity in the world : the breach of every Commandment of the Law ; the enemy of every Article of faith, and every Petition in the Lords Prayer ; and by that time we have added the rest of its deformity, you will see whether it be not the very Image of the *Devil* ; as the Love of God and our neighbour which is its contrary, is the image of God.

But now on the contrary side Self-denial complyeth with all Divine Revelations, and disposeth the soul to all holy Requests, and to the observation of every Command of God.

It humbly stoopeth to the mysteries of Faith, which others proudly quarrel with in the dark. It makes a man say, *O what am I that I should set my wit against the Lord, and make my Reason the Touch-stone of his truth, and think to Comprehend his judgements that are incomprehensible.* It causeth a man to sit as a little child, at the feet of Christ to learn his will, and say, *Speak Lord, for thy servant heareth.* It silenceth the carpings of an unsatisfied understanding, and limiteth the enquiries of a busie, prying, presumptuous wit ; and subdueth the contra-

dictions of flesh and blood : It casteth off that Pride and self-conceitedness that hindreth others from believing.

In prayer it bringeth an emptied soul, that is not stopped up against the grace and blessings of God ; It layeth us low in a receiving posture : It emptieth us of our selves, that we may be filled with God : It hath nothing to say against any one of those Requests which Christ hath put into our mouths, but subscribeth to them all. It is the highest ambition, the greatest desire of a self-denying soul, that Gods name may be hallowed and honoured, what ever become of his own Name or honour ; and that the Kingdom of God may flourish, in which he desireth to be a subject ; and that the will of God may be done, and the will of himself and all the world conformed and subjected to it : And so of the rest of the Petitions. Self-denial is *half* the *life* of Prayer.

And it is a dutiful observer of all the Commandments. It giveth up our Love to God as his Own, and consequently worshippeth him in Love, and Reverenceth his name, and observeth his time, and indeed is wholly devoted to him. And it giveth our neighbour that part of our Love which belongeth to him ; and therefore will not dishonour superiors, or encroach upon the possessions of others, or injure them for his own ends.

And indeed what should draw a self-denying man to sin, (were he but perfect in self-denial)? when the poise is taken off, the wheels all stand still : Self-denial doth frustrate Temptations, and leave them little to work upon. What should move a self-denying man to be Proud, or covetous, or injurious to others? no man doth evil, but as it seemeth good, and for some good that he imagineth it will do him : And this seeming good is to carnal self : And therefore a self-denying man hath taken off the byas of sin, and turned out the deceiver, and when Satan comes he hath litle in him to make advantage of. O how easily ~~make~~ may you take sin out of the hands of the *self-denying*, and make them cast it away with lamentation, when other men will hold it as fast as their lives ! O try this speedy way of Mortification. Would you but destroy this Original breeding sin, you would destroy all. All the sins

of

of your lives are the fruits of your *ſelfiſhneſs*; Kill them at the heart and root, if you would go the neareſt way to work. What abundance of ſin doth ſelf-denial kill at once? Indeed it is the ſum of mortification. And therefore be ſure that you deny your ſelves.

Chap. LXV.

Contrary to the State of Holineſs and Happineſs.

3. Moreover, *Selfiſhneſs is contrary to the State of Holineſs and Happineſs: contrary to every grace, and contrary to the life of Glory.* For it is the uſe of all grace to recover the ſoul from *ſelfiſhneſs* to God: that God may be Loved, and *Self-love* may be overcome: that God may be truſted, and pleaſed, and his ſervice may be our care and buſineſs, when before our care was to Pleaſe our ſelves.

And the very *felicity* of the ſoul conſiſteth in a cloſing and communion with God. The ſoul that will be happy, muſt be conſcious of *ſelf-inſufficiency*, and muſt go out of it ſelf, and ſeek after life in God; It muſt forſake it ſelf, and apply it ſelf to him. Men loſe their labour till they deny themſelves, by going to a broken empty ciſtern, and forſaking the fountain of living waters. The nearer men are to God, and the more fully they are conformed to him, and cloſe with him, and know him, and love him, the happyer they are. Glory it ſelf is but the neareſt and fulleſt intuition and fruition of God: And he that hath moſt of him here in his ſoul, and in the creatures, providences, and ordinances, is the happieſt man on Earth, and likeſt to the glorified. And there is no approach to God but by departing from carnal ſelf. I know ſelf-ſeeking men do think of finding moſt peace and comfort in that way: but they are alway deceived of their hopes: It is ſelf-denial that is the way to peace and comfort. While we reſt on our *ſelves*, or are taken up with anxious caring for our ſelves, we are but toſt up and down as on a tempeſtuous ſea, and are ſeeking

ing Rest but never find it: but when we retire from our selves to God, we are presently at the harbour, and find that Peace which before we sought in vain. I confess, in the too-little experience that I have my self of the way of peace and quiet to the soul, I must needs say, there is none to this: There is none but this. Never can I step out, but *self* meets with somewhat that is vexatious and displeasing to it: *This* business goes cross, and that business is troublesome: this person is troublesom, and that person is abusive and injurious: One is false and treacherous, or slanderous; and another is imprudent, and weak, and burdensom: what between the baits of prosperity, and the troubles of affliction, the perverseness of adversaries, and the weakness of friends, and the changes that all States and persons are liable to; the multitudes that would be pleased, and the labour and the cost that it will stand us in to please them, and the multitudes that will be displeased when we have done our best; and the murmurings, reproaches, and false accusations that we shall be sure of from the displeased; and which is worst of all, the burdensome weaknesses and corruptions of our own souls, and the sins of our lives, and the daily vexation that our dark and and shattered condition doth occasion to our selves; I say, between all these disquieting perplexities, enough to rack and tear in pieces the heart of man, I have no way but to shut up the eyes of sense, and forget all *self-interest*, and withdraw from the creature, as if there were no *self* or *creature* for it in the world, and to retire into God and satisfie my soul with his Goodness and Alsufficiency, and faithfulness, and immutability. And in him is nothing to disquiet or discontent, unless you will call his enmity to our own diseases and unhappiness a discontenting thing. And this is not my own experience alone, but all that know what Christian Peace and Comfort is, do know that they lose it, and are torn in pieces while they are caring and contriving for themselves; and that Retiring into God, and casting all their care on him, and satisfying themselves with him alone, though all the creatures should turn against them, is the way to their content and quietness of mind. The Example of *David* is exceeding observable, 1 *Sam.* 30. 6.

When

When besides the distressed estate that he was before in, the City where he left his family and the familes of his followers, was taken and burnt down, and their wives and children carried away, and all gone, so that *David* and the people that were with him, *lift up their voice and wept, until they had no more power to weep*; and to make up his calamity, the Souldiers that were with him talkt of stoning him because of the loss of their wives and children; in this desolate condition, saith the Text [*but* David *encouraged* (or comforted) *himself in the Lord his God*] And it is good for us sometime to have nothing in this world left us that will afford us comfort, that we may be driven to God for it: Till the house be as on fire over our heads, and we are as it were fired out of every room of it, we will hardly be gone, and betake our selves to God our only Rest. Try it Christians when you will, and you shall find it true, that *selfish* contents do but tice you to straggle away from your true comfort; and when you have all done, it is in returning unto God that you must find the comfort which you lost by seeking it abroad. It is [illegible] only in the God of Peace, that your souls will find peace, and therefore away from *self* and *creatures*, and retire in to God.

Chap. LXVI.

Self-seeking is self-losing : self-denying our safety.

4. MOreover, consider that *self-seeking is self-destroying, and self-denial is the only way to our safety.* We were well when we were in the hands of God, and had no need to care for our selves. But we were lost as soon as we left him and turned to our selves. If God care for you, *infinite Wisdom* cares for you; whom no enemy is able to over-wit or circumvent; who can foresee all your dangers, and is acquainted with all the ways of your enemies, and with all that is necessary to your preservation. But if you be at your *own* care, you are at the care of fools, and shortwitted people, that are not

acquainted with the depths of Satan, the subtilties of men, nor the way of your escape, but may easily be over-reached to your undoing. If you are in your own hands, you are in the hands of bad men, that though they have self-love, yet are so blinded by impiety that they will live like *self haters*; And this expecience fully manifesteth, in that all sinners are self-destroyers: No enemy could do so much against us as the best of us doth against himself: Did a man hate himself as bad as the Devil hateth him, he could shew it by no worse a way then sin; nor do himself a greater mischief then by neglecting God, and the life to come, and undoing his own soul, as the ungodly do. Should you sit down of purpose to study how to do all the hurt to your selves that you can, and to play the part of your deadliest enemies, I know not what you could do more then is ordinary with ungodly men to do, except to go a little further in the same way. Nothing but sin could alienate you from God, or make you liable to his heavy wrath: and this no man else could ~~you~~ make you guilty of, if you did not voluntarily choose to be evil. If you could ask any man that is this day in hell, or that will ever be there, what brought him thither, and who it was long of that he came to such a miserable end, he must needs tell you it was *himself*. If you come to any in earthly misery, and ask them, who brought this upon them? if they will speak truly they must say, it was themselves. And this will be a great aggravation of their misery, and the fewel that will feed the unquenchable fire, to think that all this was their own doing, and that they had not been deprived of the heavenly Glory but for their own refusal or neglect. It will fill the soul with an everlasting indignation against it self to consider that it hath cast it self wilfully into such misery! that, when Satan could not, and men could not, and God would not, if he had not done it himself, he should be so witless and graceless as to be the chooser of sin, the refuser of holiness, and his own undoer. So that the experience of all the world telleth you, how unsafe man is in his own hands: the experience of those in hell may tell us, whither it is that *self* would lead us, if we follow its conduct. Whither did *self* lead *Adam* when he hearkened to it,

but

but to sin and death? what work hath it made over all the earth? Do we not see a whole world of people, not one excepted, wounded, and slain, and brought into so low and sad a state, and all this by *themselves*! and yet shall we go on in *selfishness* still? Of all the enemies you have in the world, pray God to save you from your selves? scape your selves and you scape all. You will never miscarry by any other hands. The Devil and wicked men will do their worst; but without you they can do nothing. Never will you come to hell if you run not your selves thither: Never will you be shut out of Heaven if you run not from it by your own neglect, and prefer not the prosperity of the world before it. And therefore you see that we are nowhere more unsafe then in our own hands. Gods Will is good, and would make a good choice for us: but our wils are bad, and will make a bad choice for themselves. God is unchangable, and the same for ever; but we are giddy and uncertain, and if we are in a good mind to day, are in danger of being in a bad to morrow. God is able to secure us against all the subtilty, and rage, and power of earth or hell: but we are silly impotent worms, and unable to defend our selves, or to accomplish our own desires. So that our safely consisteth in forsaking our selves and cleaving to the Lord. The more of your happiness lieth on your own hands, the greater is your danger: and the more of it is on the hands of God, the greater is your safety. Fly therefore from your selves to God, as you would fly out of a torn or sinking vessel into the strongest ship; or as you would haste away from a tottering house that is ready to fall upon your heads: so haste away from *self* to God. Study his Love, and fall in Love with him; and that will be more gainful to you, then studying and carnally Loving your selves. Forget *your selves*, and remember him; and he will remember you to your greater advantage then if you had remembred your selves. When any interest of your Own, riseth up against the Interest or will of God, care not then for your selves or for your own; set as light by it as if it were nothing worth; and say as the three witnesses of God in *Dan.* 3.16,17. when they were ready to be cast into a flaming furnace [*We are not careful to answer thee in*

this matter: If it be so, the God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace, and he will deliver us out of thy hand O King: But if not, be it known unto thee O King that we will not serve thy gods nor worship the golden Image which thou hast set up] Care you for your Duty, and God will care for your safety better then you can do: you are safer under Gods care in the midst of a flaming fire, then under your own care in the greatest prosperity, or honour in the world. While *Abraham* and *Isaac* depended upon God, they were safe, though in the midst of dangers: but when they fell upon carnal shifting for themselves, to say their wives were their Sisters, they brought themselves but into a snare and double danger; when you have cared, and contrived, and shifted for your selves as long as you can, its God that must do the deed, and defend, and deliver you, and provide for you when all is done. Is it wise, or safe, or profitable for your child to be casting for provision of meat, and drink, and clothes for it self? Cannot you do it better? and is it not your work? and had you not rather your child would trust you with it, and meddle with his own business, and be careful to please you, and then to depend on your care and love? What good will it do a simple patient, to know the ingredients of every medicine compounded for him, and given by his Physician? or to desire to be acquainted with his Physick himself that so he may be tampering with his own body, and have the doing of the business himself, till by his unskilfulness he hath undone himself, when he had a wise and faithful Physician that he might have trusted to! O that men knew how ready a way it is to their undoing, when they must be satisfied of all the Reasons of the ways of God! and when they must have their own wils and ways, and must see a ground of safety in the creature! and must take that course that *self* tels them is the best! when they are resolved to look to their estates, and honours, and lives, and dare not cast them on the wisdom, and care, and will of God! O that men knew how sure and neer a way it is to their felicity, to be contented to be Nothing that God may be all; and then they would be More in God then they could have been in themselves: and to be contented to Die, that they may Live in God,

God; and to lose their lives that they may find them in him. Let go your reputation with men, and you will find it made up a thousand-fold in the approbation of God. Let men condemn you, so that God may but Justifie you! Let Riches go, and see whether you will not find more in God, then you could possibly lose for him. Can any man be a loser by God? or can he make an ill bargain that makes sure of heaven? Do you think there is any want of Riches or Honour there? O Sirs, win God and win all: win Heaven and never fear being losers. It seems a great loss to flesh and blood to lay down your estates, and honour, and life, for Christ and the hopes of a life to come: But it is because the flesh is blind, and cannot see so far off as everlasting is. The loss is not so great as to exchange your brass, your dirt, for gold and jewels: or to exchange your sickness for health. It is the most profitable Usury to make God your debtor, by putting all your stock into his hand, and venturing it all on his service upon the confidence of his promise.

But if you will go about to shift for your selves, you will lose your selves: and if you will save your selves, you will undo your selves; and if you will keep your Riches or honours, you do but cast them away: For all is lost that is saved from God: and that is best saved that is lost for God.

CHAP.

Chap. LXVII.

Selfishness the powerful Enemy of all Ordinances.

5. Moreover *it is self that is the most powerful resister of all the Ordinances of God; and it is self-denial that bloweth the soul to that holy compliance with them, which wonderfully furthereth their success.*

Were it not for this one prevailing enemy, what work would the Gospel make in the world! O with what confidence should we come into the Pulpit, and speak the word of God to our hearers, had we any to deal with but this *Carnal self*! God can overcome it by his victorious grace; but its so blind, so wilful, so near men, and so constant with them, that it will overcome us, and all that we can say or do, till God set in. When I come to convince a sinner of his guilt, and shew him the hainous nature of his sin, because it is his *Own*, he will not be convinced of it: when I tell them of their misery, they will not be convinced of it, because it is their own. Were I to speak all this to *another*, and tell *another* of his sin and misery, I might have these mens consent, so it reflected not upon themselves. Were I to wring the unlawful gains out of the hands of *another*, I might have their consent: or were I to perswade *another* from his Pride, or lust, or passion, they would give me free leave, because it is not *self* that is concerned in it, nor *self-denial* that is necessary to it in them. But when we come to themselves, there is no dealing with them, till God by Grace or Judgement deal with them. They can-out endure to know the worst by themselves: much less to come out of it. If we tell them of their sin and danger, they say, we speak against them! And therefore they say, It is out of malice, or humor or pride. And as well might all diseased persons say so of their Physicians, that when they tell them of their disease and danger, they speak against them, and speak out of malice or ill will. It is natural for men to think well of all them that they love, and of all that they do: and who do they love better then themselves? Pride will not let men think

think so meanly and hardly of themselves as the Scripture speaks of them, and Ministers must plainly tell them. The Prophet wept that foresaw the cruelty of *Hazael*; but he had so good a conceit of himself that he would not believe he should be so cruel, 2 Kings 8. 13. *Is thy servant a dog that he should do this?*] The false Prophet *Zedekiah* could not forbear, but struck *Micaiah*, when he made it known that he was a lying Prophet, 1 *Kings* 22. 24 And *Ahab* hated him, *because he prophesied not good of him but evil.* It was all the *Proud men* that rose up against *Jeremiah*, *and* contradicted his prophesie, and rejected his word, *Jer.* 43. 2. The word of God is quick and powerful, and a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart; and it is the plain word of that God, that feareth not the faces of the Proudest sinners on earth, and will not flatter, nor daub with any of them all, but will tell them to their faces what they are, and what will become of them if they do not turn, and what they must trust to: This is the word that God hath put into our mouths, and commanded us to preach to them: not the flattering words of an inferior, nor the tender language of a man-pleaser, but the commanding words of the God of heaven, and the peremptory threanings of everlasting fire, against all unconverted, unsanctified men, denounced from him that feareth none of them all, but will make them all to stoop at last to him, and fear, and tremble before his Majesty. And is it any wonder if Proud and *selfish* sinners are displeased with such a word as this? They stand all the while they are hearing a plain and powerful preacher, as prisoners arraigned at the bar; and sometime are ready to tremble as *Felix* did, when he heard *Paul* dilating of righteousness, and temperance and the judgment to come, *Acts* 24. 25. And can *self* endure to be thus used and arraigned for its life? especially when they think it is but by a man? For they have not the understanding to know that it is Christ that owneth all that his Messengers speak by his Commission. Hence it is that men hate those Ministers that they feel thus to judge them in their doctrine, and take them for *their enemies for telling them the truth*, Gal. 4. 16. and think they are but *the troublers of the* Countrey, as *Ahab* called

called *Elijah* the *troubler of Israel*, which he had *troubled* himself, 1 *Kings* 18.17. and meet them as he did the same Prophet, 1 Kings, 21.20. *Hast thou found me O mine Enemy?* They meet not a Minister as the Messenger of Gods that cals them to repentance, but as an enemy in the field, to strive against him, and raise up all the reasonings and passions of their souls against him, because he condemneth their unregenerate state, tels them but what God hath charged him to tell them: when the poor sinners consider not, that before God hath done with them, as sure as they breathe, he will make them either by grace or Judgement, condemn themselves as much as any of his Ministers condemned them, (from the word of God) at whom they were most offended. Ah little do these Proud worms that rage at us now for faithful dealing, and for telling them that which they will shortly find true, little do they think that they shall shortly say the very same against themselves which they hated us for saying: Nay with an hundred times more bitterness and self-revenge will they speak these things against themselves, then ever we spoke them. Hence it is that faithful plain-dealing Ministers are commonly hated and persecuted by the ungodly, especially by the great ones and honourable sinners. For their message is against *Self*, and therefore *Self* will rise up against them, and so many *selfish* unmortified persons as there be in the Congregation, so many enemies usually hath such a Minister. And therefore the Lords of *Israel* petition the King that *Jeremy* may be put to death, *Jer.* 38.4. And *Amaziah* the Priest cals *Amos* a conspirator against the King, and tels the King that the Land was not able to bear his words, and commands him to preach no more at the Kings Chappel or his Court: *Amos* 7.10, 11, 12, 13. And what was the matter that deserved all this, yea and the death of almost all the Prophets and Apostles of Christ? why it was for speaking against *self* and its carnal interest: But was it not a truth that was spoken? True or false, if it be against *self*, it cannot be born! As the Bishop of *Ments* that *Luther* speaks of, meeting with a Bible, and reading an hour in it, [*I know not*, saith he, *what book this is, but I am sure it is against us*] Meaning the Popish clergy.

So

So these men say by our preaching and by the word of God it self, Be it never so true, we are sure it is against us: Or rather [we will not believe it, because it is against us] But if these men had their wits about them, they would see that this is *for* them, which they think is against them. It is for their healing and salvation, had they hearts to entertain it, though it be for the troubling of them at the present by humiliation. O how tender are carnal persons of this *self*! How quickly do they feel, if a Minister do but touch them! How impatiently do they smart, if he meddle with the galled place; and plainly open their most disgraceful sins, and most dangerous courses, as one that had rather be guilty of displeasing them, then of silently permitting them to displease God, and undo their souls! They fret and fume at the Sermon, and go home with passion in their hearts and reproaches in their mouths against the Ministers: And are of the mind of the desperate *Sodomites*, *Gen.* 19.9. that said to *Lot* when he exhorted them, [*Stand back: This one fellow came into sojourn, and he will needs be a Judge: now will we deal worse with thee then with them*] what, say they, *can he not preach and let me alone? hath he none to rebuke before the congregation but me*! And thus will every ungodly person reject the Word as they are selfish, and *self* must be let alone in all. But why must you be let alone? will you be ever the safer or better for that! will God let you alone if we should let you alone; No; he will not be frightened from dealing with you as you are: whatever his word hath said against you, he will certainly make good, though you should never more be told of it by Ministers. You have not silenced your Judge, when you have silenced his Messengers. He will handle you in another manner then Ministers do. O how easie is it to hear a Preacher threatning the everlasting wrath, in comparison of hearing the sentence of the Judge and feeling the execution! If *we* should yield to your desires, and let you alone, God would neither let you nor us alone; you would but go the quietlier to hell; and your blood will be required also at our hands, *Ezek.* 33.6,7,8,9. and then what would become both of us and you?

O were it not for the Powerful resistance of this *selfishness*,

what work would every Sermon make that we preach to you? O what abundance would be converted at a Sermon! for what should hinder it? I should make no doubt of perswading you all to close with the Lord upon his reasonable terms, and to become a holy and heavenly people, and presently to forsake your former sin, even this hour. Nay some ordinances there are that *selfishness* hath almost shut out of the Church: as most of the exercise of the ancient Discipline, in open and personal admonitions, and publike confessions and lamentation of sin, with rejection of the impenitent, and the Absolution of the penitent: Besides most of that private address to Pastors for their advice in case of fals, and spiritual decays, or weaknesses, and difficulties that meet them in doctrine or duty. *Self* will not suffer men to stoop to most of these! What, will they be brought to open confessions and lamentations of sin, and to follow the guidance and perswasions of a Priest? no, all the Priests in *England* shall not make such fools of them: so wise are these *selfish* men for a little while! But how long will this hold! and how long will madness go for wisdom! when they are dying, then they will send for the Minister and confess: and when some of them come to the Gallows, they will confess: And every one of them shall confess at last whether they will or no; and God will indite their confession for them, and open their shame to all the world in another manner then Ministers required them to open it: But then Confession will do nothing for Remission, and the preventing of execution, as now it might have done.

So also the duty of brotherly reproof and admonition of offendors, is almost quite cast out by *selfishness*: and especially, the patient and thankful receiving of it. And those ordinances that are continued, are very much frustrated by the opposition of *selfishness*. It is a very hard task that Scripture and good books, and preachers have to do; when we speak every word to enemies of the Doctrine which we preach, and we can do them no good but by their own consent: And who will consent to that which he is an ennemy to? Our work is to subdue their flesh and Carnal wils to Christ: and this flesh is so dear to them that it is themselves: so that they take all that doctrine

doctrine to be against them which should save them: And we have as many Enemies as unconverted hearers in our assemblies: No wonder therefore if they carp, and quarrel, and strive, when the self-denying humbly submit and obey.

Self-denial openeth the heart to Christ, and giveth the ordinances leave to work: It taketh down all opposition and contradiction; so that though the soul may stay to search the Scripture, and see whether the things that are taught be so, yet it searcheth with a childlike teachableness, and willingness to learn, and know, and obey. It hath no mind to quarrel with God; how easily will a *self-denying* man submit to those duties which another man abhorrs? How easily will he be perswaded to forgive a wrong, to part with his right for a greater good to others, to let go a gainful Trade that is unlawful, or any sinful way of thriving: How easily is he brought to ask forgiveness of those that he hath wronged, to make a publike confession of his sins, if the greatness of them, or his duty to God, or the good of others, do require it; to make restitution of all that he hath gotten wrongfully; to bear a plain and sharp reproof; to part with his own for the relief of the poor; to lay out his estate to the best advantage of the Cause and Church of God, and the common good; to let go any unlawful vanity; any excess in meat, or drink, or sport, or sleep, or any vanity in apparel or other work of Pride: How easily can he bear rebukes, and reproaches, and neglects, and undervaluing or ingratitude from others! But what a do shall we have with carnal, unsanctified wretches to perswade them to all or any of this? From them a Preacher hath such a work to pull their beloved profitable sins (they seem profitable to them till the reckoning comes) as a man hath to pull the prey from the jaws of a hungry Wolf, or meat from the mouth of a greedy dog: But when we require the self-denying to do the same thing, it is but as to bid a child obey his father whom he loveth and honoureth. The doing of these duties, and forsaking these sins, is to an ungodly man as the parting with a right hand, or a right eye, or the skin from his back, or the flesh from his bones, as we see by the rarity, and the unsuccessfulness of the plainest reasons, and great authority of

God himself, and the few works of Piety, charity, or self-denyal that are done by such at any great cost. But to the *self-denying*, it is but as the casting away a handful of earth, or casting off an upper garment, for the doing of their work.

Chap. LXVIII.

Enemy of all Society, Relations and Common good.

6. Moreover, *this selfishness is the enemy to all societies, and relations, and consequently to the common good.* And it is not only indirectly and consequentially, but directly that it strikes at the very foundation of all. For the manifesting of this, consider in what respects this *selfishness* is at enmity with societies.

1. The *End* of societies is essential to them: and this End is the Common good of the society: and therefore a Republick hath its name from hence, because it is constituted and to be administred for the Commonweal, or the good of all. Now *selfishness* is contrary to this common good which is the end of all societies. Every *selfish* person is his Own End; and cares not to hinder the *common* good if he do but think it will promote his own: And how is that Family, Church, or Commonwealth like to prosper, where most (alas, *most* indeed) have an End of their own that is set up against the End and being of the society? For though the real good of particular persons is usually comprehended in the common good, yet that is but in subserviency to the publike good, and is not observed usually by these persons who principally look at themselves. And it commonly fals out that the publike welfare cannot be obtained but by such *self-denial* of the members, which these men will not submit to; though they incur a greater hurt by their *selfishness*. Little do *they* think of the common good: it is their own matters that they regard and mind. So it go well with them, let Church and Commonwealth do what it will: They

They can bear *any ones* trouble or losses save their own. They are every man as a Church, as a Commonwealth, as a world to themselves. If they be well, all is well with them: If they prosper, they think its a good world, what ever others undergo. If they be poor, or sick, or under any other suffering, it is all one to them as if calamity had covered the earth: and if they see that they must die, they take it as if it were the dissolution of the world, (unless as they leave either name or posterity behind them in which a shadow of them may survive.) And therefore they use to say [when I am gone, all the world is gone with me.]

2. Morever *Selfishness* is contrary to that *Disposition* and *Spirit* that every member of a society should be possessed with. The publike good will not be attained without a Publike spirit, to which a Private spirit is contrary. Men must be *disposed* to the work that they must be employed in. The work of every member of a society, is such as *Mordechai* is approved for, *Esther.* 10. 3. [*seeking the wealth of his people, and speaking peace to all his seed*] Every true member of the Church, must have such a spirit as *Nehemiah*, that in the midst of his own prosperity and honours is cast down in fasting, tears, and prayers, when he heareth of the affliction, reproach, and ruines of *Jerusalem*, and saith [*Why should not my countenance be sad, when the City the place of my fathers sepulchres lieth waste?*] Neh. 1.3. & 2. 3, 4. And as the captivated Jews *Psal.* 137. that lay by all their mirth and musick, and sit down and weep at the remembrance of *Zion*. A *private, selfish* disposition is quite contrary to this; and is busie about his own matters, and principally looketh to his own ends and interests, what ever come of the Church; and fals under the reproof that *Baruch* had from God, Jer. 45. 4, 5. [*Behold that which I have built will I break down, and that which I have planted I will pluck up, even this whole land; and seekest thou great things for thy self? seek them not.*] This *Private* disposition makes men so fooliish as to lose themselves, by seeking themselves; looking to their own goods or cabbins when the ship is sinking in which they are; and to their own rooms, when the house is all on fire. But a Publike Spirit saith [*If I forget thee O*

Jeruſalem, *let my right hand forget her cunning. If I do not remember thee, let my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth, if I preferr not* Jeruſalem *above my chief joy*] Pſal. 137. 5, 6. His love is to the Church as the ſpouſe of Chriſt, and as to the body of which he is himſelf a member, and his prayers and endeavours are for its proſperity and peace, Pſal. 122. 6, 7, 8, 9. [*Pray for the Peace of* Jeruſalem; *they ſhall proſper that love thee: Peace be within thy Wals and proſperity within thy Pallaces: For my Brethren and companions ſake I will now ſay, Peace be within thee: becauſe of the houſe of the Lord our God, I will ſeek thy good*] The body of Chriſt, is all animated by one ſpirit, that it might aim at one end; and it is ſo tempered by God, that there ſhould be no ſchiſm in it, but that the *members ſhould have the ſame care one for another, that if one member ſuffer all the members ſhould ſuffer with it, or if one member be honoured, all ſhould rejoyce with it*] 1 Cor. 12. 13. 24, 25, 26, 27. There is no ſerving Publike ends with a Private ſelfiſh ſpirit.

3. Moreover *ſelfiſhneſs* is an Enemy to the Laws of ſocieties, whether it be the Laws of God or man. For it would have them all bended to their private intereſt, and fitted to their ſelfiſh diſpoſition. And therefore for the immutable Laws of God, which they cannot change, they corrupt them by miſinterpretations, expounding them according to the dictates of the fleſh, and putting ſuch a ſence on all as ſelf can bear with. And what they cannot miſinterpret, they murmur at and diſobey. And for the Laws of men, where ſelfiſh perſons are the makers of them, you ſhall perceive by the warping of them, who they were made for. Hence it is that Princes and Parliaments have lookt at the Laws, and Church, and Miniſters of Chriſt, with an eye of Jealouſie as if they had been ſome enemies that they ſtood in danger of, and all for fear leſt the perſonal, ſelfiſh, fleſhly intereſt of Noblemen, and Gentlemen, and others, ſhould be incroacht upon by the Laws and Government of Chriſt. And hence it is that ſo much endeavours and hopes of a Reformation have been ſo ſo long fruſtrated, and even among wiſe and Pious Law-makers there hath been ſo much pains to keep Miniſters from doing

their

their duty in Governing the Churches, and laying such restrictions on them, that Pastors might be no Pastors, that is, no Guides and Overseers of the Church in the worship of God. And when good Laws are made, they have as many enemies as selfish men. If the Law were not hated, the execution of it would not be hated so much.

4. Also selfishness is an enemy to the very being of Magistracy, and to all publike Officers and their work. For the very End of the Magistracy is the Publike benefit, as I said before of the end of a Commonwealth: and therefore this *selfishness* is contrary to his end: and such men will not value a Magistrate as a publike officer, but only as one that is able to help them, or to hurt them; which is but to fear him as a potent enemy, and not to love or honour him as a Ruler. They look at Magistrates as at Tyrants that are too strong for them; and as a Cur will crouch to a Mastiff dog, so they will crouch to them to save themselves: and this is their love, and honour, and obedience; (even such as *Hobbs* hath taught them in his *Leviathan*) But they do not reverence that beam of Divinity which God hath communicated to them in their Authority; nor Love their Governors as the Fathers of the Church and Commouwealth, for the common good and the honour of God which they are appointed to promote.

5. And this *selfishness* is the deadly enemy of all right Administrations of Justice, and the due exercise of Authority in Church or Commonwealth. If a Minister be *selfish*, he will be shifting off the troublesom part of his duty, and will over-rule his understanding to believe that it is no duty, because dis-believing is easier then obeying. He will be forward in those duties that are necessary to his maintenance and applause, and are imposed on him by the Laws of men, but out of the Pulpit its little that he will do: As if it were the Pulpit only that were Gods Vineyard where he is set to labor. Flesh and blood shall be consulted, and men shall be pleased and all that the intereſt of *self* may be maintained.

And if the People be *selfish*, they will rebell against their faithfullest Guides, and kick against their doctrine and reproofs, and fly from Discipline, which seems to their distempered

pered minds to be againſt them. Let but one moſt notorious, lamentable inſtance ſuffice. The greater part of our Pariſhioners in moſt places of the land are lamentably ignorant and careleſs in the matters of their ſalvation, and all that we can do is too little to bring them to underſtand the matters of abſolute Neceſſity: and yet almoſt all of them are ſo much wiſer in their own conceits then the ableſt of their Teachers, that if we do not humor them, and be not Ruled by them in our doctrine and adminiſtrations, about Sacraments, Prayer, Burial, and the reſt, yea if we obey them not in geſtures and forms, they turn their backs upon officers, and ordinances, and the Church it ſelf, and pour out their reproach upon their Teachers, as if we were ignorant in compariſon of them (even of them that know not ſo much as children of ſeven or eight year old ſhould know.) See here the wonderful, bewitched power of a *ſelfiſh* diſpoſition.

And in matters of the Commonwealth, what is it more then this! nay what is it beſides this, that maketh Princes become Tyrants, and Rulers keep under the ordinances and intereſt of Chriſt, or fearfully neglect them, and look after the Church in the laſt place, when they have no buſineſs of their *own* to call them off, and to begin to build Gods houſe when they have firſt built their own, not imitating *Nehemiah's* labourers that had the ſword in one hand, and the trewel in the other, and builded in their arms! what elſe makes them give God but their leavings who giveth them all! And what elſe could make them ſuch enemies to Truth, as to ſide with thoſe parties what ever they be that ſide moſt with them, and promote their intereſt?

And alas what work doth ſelfiſhneſs make with inferior Magiſtrates? It is this only that opens the hand to a Reward, and the ear to the ſolicitations of their friends; and its this that perverteth the judgement, and this that oppreſſeth the poor and innocent, and this that tyeth the tongues and hands of Juſtices, ſo that abundance of them do little more then poſſeſs the room, and ſtand like an armed ſtatue or a ſign-poſt, which hurteth none; Ale-houſes do what their liſt for them, and drunkards and ſwearers are bold at their noſes, and they

are

are no terror to evil doers, nor revengers to execute wrath upon them, nor Miniſters that uſe their power for much good, but bear the Sword almoſt in vain, contrary to the very nature of of their office, *Rom.* 13. 1, 2, 3. 4.

And it is *ſelfiſhneſs* in the people that cauſeth the trouble of faithful Magiſtrates: Every man would do what his liſt. The worſt Offendor abhorres him that would puniſh him: And thoſe that will commend Juſtice, and cry down vice in the general, yet when they fall under Juſtice themſelves, they take all that they ſuffer to be injury, and will do all that they can againſt Juſtice and the Officers of it, when it is to defend themſelves or theirs from the execution of it: ſo rare a thing is it to meet with a man that is a friend to Laws and Juſtice, when themſelves muſt ſuffer by it.

6. *Selfiſhneſs* alſo makes men withdraw from all thoſe neceſſary burdens and duties that are for the preſervation of Church or Commonwealth. Such wretches had rather the Goſpel were thruſt out of doors then it ſhould coſt them much: and had rather have the unworthieſt man that would be their Teacher for a little, then allow the beſt that maintenance that the Goſpel doth command, or give them what the Law hath made their Own. They would venture the ruine of Church and State, and let all fall into the hands of the common enemies, rather then hazard their perſons, or lay out their eſtates for the common preſervation. So that if the hand of violence did not ſometime ſqueeze theſe Spunges, and force theſe leeches to diſgorge themſelves, they would but impoveriſh the Commonwealth by their riches, and weaken the body like wens or impoſtumes by drawing to themſelves.

7. And then the ſelfiſh are ſuch cauſes of Diviſion, that if they did no other harm, they would break both Church and State into pieces, if their humor were predominant, and not reſtrained or purged out. And in this regard *ſelfiſhneſs* is the direct enemy of ſocieties, and is always at work to diſſolve them into independant individuals. A Society is a Political Body which muſt have but one Head, and one Intereſt and one End: But when *ſelfiſhneſs* prevaileth, there are as many Heads,

and Ends, and Interests as Persons : If they be in a Church, every one is the Teacher and Ruler : and every one must have his opinion countenanced , and his humor satisfied ; Every one must have his way and will : And how is this possible , when their minds are so various and contrary to one another ; and their Interests so inconsistent, and there are as many Rulers as persons : when every man is drawing to himself, and there is no center in which they can unite, what work is there like to be in the Church? What progress could be made in the building of *Babel*, when no man was ruled by another, but every man ran confusedly after his single imagination ? what an Army will it be, and how are they like to speed in fight, where every Souldier is instead of a Captain and General to himself, and one runs this way, and another that way, and one will have one course taken, and another another course, and every one fighteth on his own head : such work doth selfishness make in the Church : It is this that hath broken it into so many parcels, and would crumble it all to dust if it should prevail.

And it is this also that causeth the divisions of the Commonwealth ; faction rising up against faction , and Prince and People living in jealousies of each other as having contradictory interests; which would not be if the Pleasing of God, and the common good were the principal End and Interest of them all, and selfishness did not prevail.

And this is it that keepeth Christian Princes in most ungodly wars, to the shedding of Christian blood, and the weakening of the common interest , and the strengthening of the common enemy , whom they should all joyn together to resist.

This also keepeth up so many parties on Religious pretences to seek the undermining and ruine of each other, when they should all joyn together against the common prophanes of the world ; and all their conjunct endeavours would be too little. Thus selfishness is the grand Enemy that by divisions and subdivisions is still at work for the dissolution and ruine of Church and State, and the confusion of the world,

and

and the disturbance and destruction of order and government.

8. Yea *Selfishness* makes men false and treacherous, so that they are not to be trusted, and are unmeet materials for any society. For what ever they promise, pretend, or seem, they are all for themselves, and will be no further true and faithful to the society or any member of it, then suiteth with their own Ends : Never trust a *selfish* person, if it be your own Brother, further then you can accomodate and please him, and so oblige him to you upon his Own account. It is the Complication of Interests that makes Husband and Wife so much agree and love each other : because that which one hath the other hath : But if their Interests fall out to be any whit divided, its too to one but *selfishness* will divide their affections. One would think that the bond of nature should be so strong to constrain a Son to love his Father, that nothing could dissolve it : And yet sad experience telleth us that even here, it is an unity of Interest that doth more with many children then either nature or grace : and that when they have no more dependance upon their parents for their commodity. their affections and respects are gone ; and if they shall gain much by their death, they can bear it without much sorrow, if not desire it. So potent is *selfishness*, that it makes not men unfaithful only to their friends, and treacherous to their Governors, and false to all they have to do with, but also unnatural to their neerest Relations.

And therefore (next to true Piety which leads up all to an Unity in God, and therefore is the most perfect Polity) the chief point of humane Polity, for the preservation of Commonwealths and all Societies, is, a Complication of Interest : when the Constitution makes the Governor and the Governed as Husband and Wife, that have nothing dividedly as their own, but all in common, and take each other for better or worse, and know they must stand or fall together, and that the good or hurt of one is the good or hurt of both, and that there is no manner of hope that either of them should thrive by the ruine of the other. If Politicians had the skill and will to make such an union of Interests between the So-

raign and the Subject, and to make it visible that all might understand it, their Republicks would be Immortal, till either the wrath of a Neglected God, or the Power of a forreign enemy should dissolve them: For nothing else but *self could* do it; and *self will* not do it when it sees its own interest lie in the preservation of the present State.

Chap. LXIX.

Corrupteth and debaseth all that it disposeth of.

7. Another aggravation of the evil of *selfishness* is, that *it corrupteth and debaseth every thing that it disposeth of.* And on the contrary it is the excellency of *self-denial* (as joyned with the Love of God) that *it rectifieth and enobleth all your actions.*

Let the work be never so Holy in its own nature, yet if you do it but for *your selves*, you make a prophane employment of it; and to you it is not Holy. A *selfish* carnal person is serving himself even in Preaching, and hearing, and praying, and Sacraments, and other acts of worship and Church-communion: Much more in the common business of his life. Even when he thinks he is serving God, he is but serving himself of God, and provoking God by this abuse: when he thinks he is very holy because of his services, he is doubly unholy, in that he even prophaneth holy things. And as it is not God indeed that he serveth, so from God he must not expect a Reward. And as far as a mans *self* and *flesh* is below the blessed God, so far, in a sort, is the work of *selfish* men debased, in comparison of those works of the Saints that are performed purely for God. They make but a low unprofitable drudgery of that which in the hands of others is the highest and noblest work on earth. For the action can be no better then the End; and therefore is base as it is base.

But on the other side, self-denial makes noble the actions that

that in themselves seem base. If you are gone out of your selves, and can truly say, that it is God you serve and seek in your employments, you may be sure that God will take them for his service, and set them on your account among the works that he hath promised to reward (supposing that the Matter be such as he allowerh of, and that you think not by good Intentions to turn sin to holiness, and make him a service of that which he forbiddeth.) O what an honour, what an encouragement, what a comfort is this, to every Christian! The actions of a Prince or Conqueror are base, if *self* be their End, and the respect to God do not ennoble them. And the work of the poorest person is honourable that is done for God. It is a great temptation to some poor Christians to grudge at their condition, because they are so unserviceable to God. Alas thinks a poor tradesman, or plowman, or servant, What do I but drudge in the world? I have neither parts nor place to do God service with! But such do very much mistake the matter. It is not the parts and place but the hearty performance of your works for God that makes them such as he will take for service. O thinks a poor woman or toiling servant; I can do nothing either for the Conversion of souls, or the good of Church or Commonwealth, but am made unserviceable: But do you not know that any thing is acceptable service which God commandeth, and is heartily intended to his honour and his Pleasure: It is not the mettle but the stamp of the Prince that makes a piece to be currant money. If the Kings stamp were put by his appointment on a piece of brass or copper, it would pass for coin. Believe it sirs, if your study be to Please the Lord in your callings, & you can but get above *your selves*, and do the basest servile works, as commanded you by God, that you may be Accepted by him, and offer your *selves* and all your labours purely to him, and to his honour, and his will, God will take these for honourable services; and you are as truly at his work even in your shops and fields as Princes are in Ruling, or Pastors in teaching or guiding the flock: you that are poor, and cannot set so much time apart for reading and other holy duties as some other do, see that you neglect no holy opportunity that you can take, and then consider, that if God

set you to do him service even by washing dishes, or sweeping channels, or the meanest drudgery, he will accept it; and the more, by how much the more humble submission and *self-denial* is found in it. Take him as the only Lord and Master of your souls and lives, and all that you have, and when you are called to your daily labour, look but to your hearts that God be your End, and that you can truly say, [I do not this principally to provide for my self, but as an obedient child in my Fathers service, because he bids me do it, and it is pleasing to him through Christ; I do it not principally from *self-love*, but from the Love of God that commandeth me my work; and as a traveller that laboureth in his way for the love of his home, so I am here at labour in this world in the place that God hath set me, that I may in his appointed way attain the everlasting glory that he hath promised] I say, do but see to it, that thus you dedicate your labors to God, and you may take comfort in the daily labours of your lives, even the meanest and most contemptible, as well as Princes and Preachers may in their more honourable works. Nay all your labours are honoured and sanctified by this: For all is Holy that is heartily devoted to God, upon his invitation. And thus all things are pure to the pure. For it is Gods interest in your work that is the holiness and excellency of them. Were servants and labouring people more *Holy* and *self-denying*, they might have more true comfort in their daily labour, then the best of the unsanctified can have from their prayers or other worship of God. Not that worship may be therefore neglected, but that a Christian must do nothing at all but for God; and then he may be sure of Gods Acceptance.

CHAP.

Chap. LXX.

Deny Self or you will deny Christ.

8. Moreover, *the selfish will never suffer as Christians, but deny Christ in a day of trial; when the self-denying will go through all, and be saved.* Nothing doth so throughly try whether self or God be best beloved, as suffering for his cause. In this it is that Christ useth to try mens self-denial: and it is a principal use of persecution. When you hear of coming before Rulers and Judges, and being hated of all men for Christs name sake, then self riseth up to plead for its interest, and never maketh more ado then when it seeth the flames. The flesh cannot Reason, but it can strive against Reason, and draw it to its side. No Reason seemeth sufficient to it, to perswade it to choose a suffering state. If you perswade a Carnal man to let go his estate, to be poor and despised in the world, and to give up life it self if it be called for, and all this for the hope of an invisible felicity, you lose your labour (till God set in), and all such reasoning seems to him most unreasonable. And what a dreadful case such souls are in, my text and many an other passage in Scripture may convince you. If you cannot drink of his cup, and be baptized with his baptism, you cannot be advanced with him to glory. Through many tribulations we must enter into the Kingdom of God. The pleasing of the flesh is the high way to misery by displeasing God: and the voluntary submission to the suffering of the flesh for the cause of Christ, is the high way to felicity, 2 Tim. 2. 11, 12. [*It is a faithful saying: for if we be dead with him, we shall also live with him; if we suffer, we shall also reign with him; if we deny him, he also will deny us*] Rom. 8. 17. [*Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution*] 2 Tim. 3. 12. The day of trial is a kind of Judgement day to the selfish unsanctified man: For it discovereth his hypocrisie, and sheweth him to be but dross and separateth him from the suffering servants of Christ.

But

But self-denial maketh suffering light, and will make you wish that you had any thing worth the resigning unto Christ, and any thing by the denial whereof you might serve him. For him you would suffer the loss of all things, and account them dross and dung that you may win him. *Phil.* 3. 8. He will count us *worthy of the Kingdom for which we suffer*, 2 Thes. 1. 5. As the *Captain of our salvation was made perfect by suffering*, Heb. 2. 10. so also must his members, by *filling up the measure*, and being *made partakers of his sufferings*, and *knowing the fellowship of them*, 2 Cor. 1. 5, 6, 7. Phil. 3. 10. And the *God of all grace, who hath called us into his eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after we have suffered a while, will make us perfect, stable, strengthen and settle us*, 1 Pet. 5. 10.

If therefore you would not prove Apostates, and deny Christ in a day of trial, and be denied by him before his Father and the holy Angels, see that you now learn this needful lesson of *self-denial*.

CHAP.

Chap. LXXI.

The selfish deal worse with God then with Satan.

9. Consider also that *selfish Carnal men deal worse with God, then they do with the Devil and sin it self.* God offereth them Christ and pardon, and eternal life if they will but deny themselves in a thing of nought, and they will not be ruled or perswaded by him: The Devil offereth them but the delights of the flesh, and the pleasures of sin for a season, and they will deny ten thousand fold more for this. They will deny God their Maker and Redeemer, their Lord and Judge, their Preserver and their hope: though he have the only Title to them, and their lives and souls be in his hand: They will for the sake of a filthy lust, or of a short and miserable life, deny him that never did them wrong, nay that hath alwayes shewed them kindness, even all the kindness that ever they received; and that when they know that their everlasting state must stand or fall according to his judgement. They will deny the Lord Jesus the Redeemer of their souls: They will deny and resist the holy spirit of God: They will deny his Laws, his Gospel-promises, and all his Mercies: They will deny his Ministers and all their perswasions and daily labours: They will deny their dearest Christian friends, and deny their own Consciences and Convictions; and deny themselves the Peace and Joy which they might find in a holy walking with God: Yea they will deny themselves everlasting life, and the favour of God and cast themselves into endless misery; and for all this a thing that is ten thousand times worse then nothing, or for a very sensual brutish pleasure. And yet these men cannot deny themselves in life, or liberty, in gain, or honour, no nor in the filthiest lusts for the sake of Christ and their own salvation: Even when they may know that they most deny themselves when they will not deny themselves.

They deny themselves eternal glory, because they will not deny themselves in temporal vanity. Heaven and earth will witness against such sottish and unrighteous dealing as this, if true Conversion do not prevent it. Hath God, hath Christ, hath your own salvation deserved no better at your hands then this? O miserable souls! All things can be easily denyed save sin and Carnal self, and these cannot be denyed. God can be denyed, Christ and Scripture and Heaven it self can be denyed, for flesh and sin, and flesh and sin cannot be denyed for God and for eternal glory. Do you think that this will look like wise or righteous dealing when you stand in judgement? Ask now any stander by that is impartial, whether God or the flesh should be denyed? Whether heaven or earth should be denyed, seeing one of them you must deny? And if any impartial man will be now against you, what think you will God be, who is not only impartial, but wronged by you and a hater of your unrighteous dealing?

CHAP.

Chap. LXXII.

To be left to self, is the sorest plague.

10. Lastly, remember, *that to be given over to our selves is the heaviest plague on this side Hell*: And therefore he that delighteth not to be miserable should not desire to be *selfish*. To be given over to the Love of your selves, is to turn from the Love of the blessed God to the Love of a filthy sinner, and so to forfeit Gods love to you. To be given over to care for your selves, is to forfeit the fatherly care of God, and be at the care of a silly insufficient improvident sinner. To be given over to your own Conceits or Wisdom, is to be forsaken of the Sun, and left in darkness, and spend the rest of your dayes in a dungeon, the beginning of the endless utter darkness. To be given over to your own wills, is to be at the choice and disposal of a fool and of an enemy; and to be in such hands as will certainly undo you, and to be cast out of the hands of God: To be given over to *seek* your selves, is to lose your selves and God, and your salvation. To be given over to live as your *own*, is to forfeit the Protection of God, whithout which you cannot be kept an hour out of hell. To be given over to the *defending* of your selves, and delivering your selves in danger of soul and body, is even to be exposed to certain and perpetual perdition. To be given over to be *ruled* by your selves, is to be relinquished as Rebels, and exposed to the tyranny of sin and Satan. So that in all things it is most certain, that you are never well but in the hands of God, and never so ill as when you are most in your own hands. In Paradise innocent man was wholly at the Government of God: and when by casting off his Government he had forfeited the benefit of it, the most of the world became even brutish: And when God had owned the Government of *Israel* above other Nations, and kept the choice of the Soveraign under him in his own hands, at last the foolish peo-

ple in imitation of the Nations must needs have a King, and extort the Nomination out of the hands of special extraordinary Providence, that they might have more of it in their own; and this was an increase of their misery. Woe to that man that ever he was born, that is finally given over to himself: For this is a sign that God hath forsaken them, and they stand at the brink of eternal death. O think of this you that are *self-conceited*, and *self-willed*, and *self-lovers*, and *self-seekers*, and know not how to deny your selves: Must *self* be so regarded and tenderly used? Take heed, you may have enough of *self* with everlasting vengeance, if God once give you over to your selves, and say of you as of them, Psal. 81. 11, 12. [*But my people would not hearken to my voice; and* Israel *would none of me: So I gave them up to their own hearts lust, and they walked in their own Council.*] So much for the Aggravations.

CHAP.

Chap. LXXIII.

Ten Directions to get self-denyal.

IV. I Come now to the last part of my task, which is to tell you, what course you should take to procure *self-denyal.* For though it be the gift of God, yet there are certain means appointed us for the attainment of it, and God useth to give it men in the use of his means, and by those means must it be confirmed and continued.

Direction 1. *Set faith a work upon the promises of God and upon everlasting life*: For the *Flesh* will not be taken off these lower things till you have found out better, and such as will be sure to save you harmless. The most coveteous man would let go silver if he may have gold instead of it. Set faith a pleading the case with the flesh: and urge your own hears with the Certainty, the Neerness, the Glory, the Eternity of the Kingdom which by *self-denyal* you may attain; and if they will not yield to such a change as this, they are unreasonable unbelieving hearts.

Direct. 2. *Never be deluded to forget the vanity, the brevity, and the emptiness and insufficiency, of all these earthly things,* which *self* so adhereth to as to neglect the promised life of blessedness. Acquaint your own hearts what a nothing it is that they make so much of, and follow so greedily and hold so fast? shew them in the Sanctuary the glass of the word of God, which will tell them what will be the end of all, and where all their worldly prosperity will leave them? Ask your hearts, [Can I keep these things for ever; or not? If not? is it not better let them go for something, then for nothing; and to part with them as a child at the command of my heavenly father, then to part with them as a thief doth with his prize, at the Gallows? Is it not better let them go to ease me, and to secure my eter-

nal peace, then let them go to wound me and torment me! And while I keep them, what will they do for me, that I should buy them at so dear a rate! O how dear must I pay for my ease, and honour and gluttony and drunkeness and sensual delights, if I part not with them when God commandeth? How cheap is a holy blessed life in comparison of this which I must pay so dear for!]

Direct. 3. To promote your self-denyal, *Consider frequently and seriously, who God is, and to what end he made, redeemed, sustaineth and governeth the world: And then bethink you, whether it be meet that this Glorious God should be neglected, and frustrated of the end of all these works!* and whether any thing besides him be fit to be the creatures end. You think it meet that every workman should have the use of his own work. Doth any man make a house for its own sake, or for his use to dwell in? Is it for the *things* sake that any man makes an instrument, or for his service by it; Do you think that God made you *for* your selves: and not for himself and service? give therefore to God the things that are Gods: All souls are his, and therefore all should acknowledge him, and submit to his dispose and pleasure. Shall the pot quarrel with the Potter, or claim title to it self and say, I am mine own? It is against the cleerest reason in the world, that any but the Creator, Redeemer and Preserver of the world should be Lord, and the Governour and the end of it; and that men should prefer themselves before him.

Direct. 4. Moreover it will further your *self-denyal* to *remember what you will get by selfishness*: God *will* have his Ends and Honour out of you one way or other, whether you will or no; He will have your goods from you, and your lives from you; and the faster you hold them, the more you will suffer when he wringeth them out of your hands. The most covetous man would part with his money to buy a Lordship, if he knew it would else be taken from him: A worldly treasure is obnoxious to rust, and mothes, and Thieves: and if you exchange it not for the heavenly treasure in time, and remove not your riches to the world that you

you must for ever live in, what will you do when you must remove your selves? And all your self-denyal is but such an exchange or removal which all should be glad of that know they must be gone themselves; Nay more, consider still that *selfishness* makes you an Idol to your-self, and therefore you do but set up your selves as a Mark for the jealous God to shoot at, and every hour you have reason to expect, that the terrible hand of justice should lay hold upon you, and try you at the barr of that God whose prerogative you did usurp.

Direct. 5. And it may much further your self-denyal to *take a considerate survey of the world, and see but what self-seeking hath already done, and is still doing in it.* What a dolefull sight of wickedness, confusion and misery must you see, which way ever you look: and all is most evidently the fruit of *selfishness*. Me thinks it should waken every sober man against it, that doth but observe what work it hath made; that seeth families disordered and ruined by it; Neighbours set in dissention by it; Churches divided by it; Religion dishonoured by it; and multitudes of them that seem to be Religious, to be be so lamentably deceived and enslaved by it: Princes and great men blinded by it; Judges and Learned men befooled by it; and the Nations of the world almost all set together by the ears by it: So that it hath turned the world into the confusion of *Babel*, that no man can understand a word of the language that tendeth to Unity, Peace and building up: Princes understand it not: too many Preachers understand it not; but the language of scorn and strife and dissention they understand: so that the world is cast all into a hurly burly, and every mans hand is against his brother when he scarce knows why. No Church or State can stand without disturbance: No truths without contradiction: Under pretence of coming in to Christ, they are busily uncovering his house, when the door is wide open, and there are more to invite them then to hinder them. Me thinks as a man that observeth the carriage of mad men or drunken men, should never have any mind to be mad or drunken, so he that ob-

serveth

serveth but what *self-seeking* hath done in the world, should have little mind to be *self-conceited*, *self-willed* or *self-seeking*, but should love and honour *self-denyal*.

Direct. 6. If you would promote *self-denyal*, *keep with you the continuall feeling of your own unworthiness and insufficiency*: No man will trust upon a broken staff if he know it; nor be so foolish as to go about to walk upon the water, which he knows will not bear him. One would think this should be an easie and an effectual remedy. Should it not be easie for such wretched sinners as we to carry about with us a sense of our unworthiness? For such Lepers to carrry about a sense of our uncleanness: Me thinks so many and great diseases should make us feel them. O then consider, as creatures you are utterly insufficient for your selves; and as sinners much more. God never made you to live upon or to your selves; or without him, or without the help of others. There are few beasts when they are first brought forth into the world, but are more able to help themselves then man; When he is newly born, he can do nothing to help himself. And when he comes to age he is naturally formed to a sociable life; so that if he should retire from the world, and live only by and off himself, he would soon find what it is to be selfish: Much more if he be left to himself by God, or forsake God, and trust to and depend upon himself. But if ever innocent man had been sufficient for himself: yet *sinfull* man can have no pretence to such a priviledge, while he beareth about him so many convincing evidences of the contrary, every day. Do you not feel sin as a heavy burden pressing you down, and perceive how easily it entangleth and besetteth you? sure you do, if you be not past feeling. And do you not know enough of the nature and desert of sin, to drive you out of your selves, and bring you to him that calleth the weary and heavy laden to come to him for ease and rest, *Mat.* 11.28. Do you not feel a continual burden of infirmities? and doth not experience tell you that you are not sufficient to relieve your selves in any pain or sickness that doth befall you? you cannot support your selves a moment: you

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are ſtill in the hands of that inviſible God whom you abuſe by your *ſelf-ſeeking*. You would drop into Hell if he withdrew the hand of his patience and ſupport, as ſure as a ſtone would fall to the earth that were looſe in the air! As truly as the earth beareth you, ſo truly doth he bear the earth and you. It is eaſier for houſes and towns and mountains to ſtand in the air without the earth; then for you or any thing to ſubſiſt a moment without the Lord. Who keeps your heart and pulſe ſtill beating, and your blood and ſpirits in continual motion, and warm your veins? Is it God or you? who is it that cauſeth your lungs to breath, your ſtomack to turn your meat to nouriſhment; and that nouriſhment into blood and ſpirits and ſtrength? Is it God or you? Who is it that cauſeth the Sun to riſe upon you in the morning to light you to your labours, and to ſet upon you at night, that the Curtains of darkneſs may be drawn about you, and you may quietly repoſe your ſelves to reſt? Who giveth you ſtrength to labour in the day, and refreſheth you with ſleep at night, and provideth all the creatures for your aſſiſtance? Is it you or God? O Sirs, methinks ſuch ſilly worms, that cannot live a minute of themſelves, and cannot fetch a breath of themſelves, ſhould eaſily ſee that they ſhould not *live to themſelves*, but to him from whom and by whom they live.

Direct. 7. If you would live in ſelf-denyal, *be ſure that you keep the maſtery of your ſenſes*: aud do not let them be ungoverned, but ſhut them up when reaſon doth require it. It is your Appetite and ſenſes that feed this carnal ſelfiſh vice: but reaſon and faith are both againſt it. When ever you conſult with *ſenſe*, you may know what brutiſh advice you may expect. Ask not therefore what is delightfull, nor what is for your carnal eaſe and peace; but what is neceſſary to pleaſe the Lord, and for your everlaſting peace. And if the tempter tell you, [This is the eaſier and the broader way] tell him that it is not the honeſter nor the ſafer way: And the queſtion is is not which is the faireſt way? but, which the way to heaven? Its better go the hardeſt way to glory, then the ſmootheſt to damnation. If you cannot keep un-

der your sensitive appetite, and subdue the eager desires of the flesh, and learn to want as well as to abound, to be empty as well as to be full, you will never attain to self-denyal.

Direct. 8. To promote your self-denyal, me thinks it should be effectual *to understand the great advantage that you have by the Communion and Society which you enter into when you deny your selves.* Though a Prince or Lord would be loth to enter into a Colledge or Monastery where there's no Propriety, and yet withall, no care or want; yet a poor labouring man or a beggar would be glad of such a life. So you that cannot live of your selves, me thinks should be glad of such a *Community.*

1. Consider that the Lord Jesus is the Head of the Society, who hath undertaken to make provision for the whole, and is engaged for their security, and to save them harmless: and all the riches of his grace and love belong to that society, and will be yours; which is more then all that you can part with of your own, yea more then all the treasures of the world. It is therefore the noblest and richest society in the world that you shall live in communion with, if you will deny your selves.

2. And the Saints that are the members of that Society are the brethren of Christ and the heirs of heaven. And all these are your Brethren; endeared in special love to you, engaged to assist you, by prayers, and counsel, and pains and purse, and every way that you can: so that well might Christ say that, he that forsaketh any thing for him, shall receive even an hundred fold in this life, and in the world to come eternal life. For this one sorry *self* that you forsake, and its poor accommodations, you have God for your Father and Christ for your Head, and the Holy Ghost for your sanctifier and comforter, and the Scripture for your guide, and Saints for your Brethren, Companions and Assistants, engaged to you in truer and dearer love then your unsanctified friends that cast you off for the sake of Christ. And had you rather be toiling and caring for your selves, then let go *self* and enter into so blessed a *Community*, where you may

may cast all your care away upon God, who hath promised to care for you; and may feed your selves in the daily delightfull forethoughts of life eternal?

Direct. 9. And me thinks it should much promote your *self-denyal*, *to study well the self-denying example of Christ, and his eminent servants that have troden in his steps.* Christ had no sinfull *self* to deny; nor any corrupted flesh to mortifie or subdue. And yet he had a self-denyal in which we must imitate him: Rom. 15.3. [*For even Christ pleased not himself, but as it is written, The reproaches of them that reproached thee are faln upon me.*] We are told therefore by Christs example, that it is not only the pleasing of *self* as corrupted by sin, but also a pleasing of natural *self* in things where God may lay a restraint on it, or put it to the tryal, that we must avoid, and in which we must deny our selves: Even as *Adam* was to have denyed his natural appetite before sin had corrupted it, and Christ had an innocent natural will of which yet he saith, [*Not my will, but thine be done.*] His whole life was a wonderfull example of *self-denyal*: He lived in a low estate, and denyed himself of the glory and riches of the world, and *became poor, though he were Lord of all, that by his poverty we might be made rich*, 2 *Cor.* 8, 9. He lived under the reproach of sinners; of sinners that he created: of sinners whom he dyed for: He would wear no Crown, but a Crown of Thorns: He would wear no Robes but the Robes of their reproach: He yielded his cheeks to be smitten, and his face to be spit upon, by the vilest sinners, whom he could with a word have turned into hell. And at last he gave himself for us on the Cross in suffering a reproachfull cursed death, *Heb.* 7.27. *Tit.* 2.14. *Eph.* 5.2. 25. *Gal.* 1.4. And can you read such an example of self-denyal, given you by the Lord of glory, and not be transformed into the image of it? I think the study of a *self-denying* Christ is one of the most excellent helps to self-denyal. Take it from the Apostle himself, Phil. 2. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8. [*Fulfill ye my joy, that ye be like-minded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind; let nothing be done through strife or vainglory, but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better*

then themselves: Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others. Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus; who being in the form of God, thought it no robbery to be equal with God; but made himself of no reputation and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men, and being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself and became obedient unto death, even the death of the Cross: Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him] [*Look therefore unto Jesus the Author and Finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the Cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God: Consider him that endured such contradictions of sinners against himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds,*] Heb. 12, 2, 3, 4.

Direct. 10. But the greatest help to self-denyal is, *To retire from the Creature into God, and live in the love of him, and employ the soul continually upon him.* Men will not be frightned from self-love. It must be *another* more powerful *Love* that must *draw* them from it. And that can be none but the *Love of God.* When you have soundly discerned a surer friend then self, a wiser, a better, an abler Governour and Defender, and one that much more deserveth all your Love and Care; then you will turn away from self, and never till then. See therefore that you espouse no Interest but God; and then you will have nothing to call you from him: Let Love so close you with him and unite you to him, that you may know no Happiness but his Love and Glory, and see with no other Light then his: and know no will but the will of God; nor meddle with any work which for matter and end you cannot call the work of God. Then you have indeed denyed your selves, when you *are* nothing, *have* nothing, and *do* nothing, but as *from* God, and *by* him and *for* him: Own not any *self* but *in* and *for* God, and then you may love and seek it freely; or this is to be called a loving and seeking of God and not of *self.* Own not any Knowledge, but that which is from the Light of God, by his word, works, Spirit and Ordinances, and which leadeth you to God in Holiness and Peace, and guideth you in his service, and

and then you need not condemn your selves of *self-conceitedness*, or a *selfish* understanding. Know not any will in your selves, but that which is caused by the will of God, and directed by it, and intended to fulfill it; So that you may be able to say of every desire of your soul, I desire this because that God would have me desire it, and I am resolved to follow his will in the seeking of it, and the end of my desire is that I may please him, and his will may be done,] and then you may say, you have conquered *self-will*. O see then that you be more with God: aod study his Mind and Will, his Excellency, Sufficiency and Love, and remember that you are a dependent being, that are nothing but in & by him, & therefore should know no interest but him & his Interest, nor possess any thing but for him, nor know any will or way but his will and way, and so let *his* be *yours*, and *yours* be *his*, by a holy resignation, conformity, and subserviency unto *his*; and this is the true rectitude and holiness of man, *this* is a *finding* our selves by losing our selves, and the only saving and exalting of our selves by denying our selves. *Nothing but the light of God will master self-conceitedness: and nothing but the love of God will overcome self-love: and nothing but a union and closure with the will of God will overcome self-will: and nothing but an espousing and intending God and his interest will cause a true denyal of carnal self-interest: and nothing but a seeking of God, conversing as with him, and living to him, will cure the soul of self-seeking and an ungodly and unprofitable living to our selves.*

One other Direction I should add, which is to be alwayes jealous and suspicious of *self*; but this will fall in the Conclusion.

The Conclusion.

I Have now finished what I had to say to you on this great and needfull subject: And I have stayed the longer on it, that I might occasion your own thoughts to be the longer on it: For it is not a few hasty running thoughts that will make any great impression on the soul. And now, Christian friends, whoever you are that hear or read these words, I earnestly intreat you in the name of God that you will set your hearts to the deep consideration of the nature and odiousness of this sin of *selfishness*; and of the nature and necessity of *self-denyal*. You will never effectually hate and resist the sin which you think lightly of, and is not in any great discredit with you; nor will you fly from it with fear and care and vigilancy, till you apprehend the dangerousness of it. I have not only told you, but proved it to you; that this is one of the most odious and dangerous sins in the world, even the sum of all iniquity, that containeth a thousand sins in the bowels of it: This is it that generateth all other vices, and fills the world with swarms of mischief. It is this *selfishness* that corrupteth all estates, and distracteth all societies, and disturbeth all affairs. Never look further for the cause of our calamities: It is *self* that causeth the miscarriages and negligence of the Princes, Governours and Magistrates of the world, while they look all at their own Interest, and little at the things of Jesus Christ, or at least prefer themselves before him. It is self that causeth the disobedience of subjects, while they judge themselves capable of censuring their Rulers for matters that are beyond their *reach*; and grudge at alll necessary burdens for the common good, because they are a little pinched by them. It is *self* that hath kindled the miserable wars that are laying waste so many Countreys, and that makes such woefull havock in the world. It is *self* that hath so lamentably abused Religion, and introduced so many fantastical *self-conceits* under the name of high Scholastical subtilties: and that hath let in so many errors in doctrine and

and worship, and defiled Gods Ordinances, and corrupted and almost extinguished the Discipline of Christ in the Church. It is *self* that hath caused the leaders of the Assemblies, that should be extemplary in Unity and Holiness, and industry, to be some of them idle and negligent, and some of them carnal and vicious, and so many of them in discord and fierce opposition of one another: So that every man that is grown up to a high degree of wisdom in his own eyes (and such Degrees are soon attained) is presently venting his own conceits, and perhaps publishing them to the world, and seeking out an adversary to shew his manhood upon, and reviling all that are not of his opinion; as if there were no difficulty in the matter, but *he* is Learned and Wise, and they are all unlearned and and ignorant: he is Orthodox, and they are Hereticks, or what his pride and *self-conceitedness* is pleased to call them. It is this *selfishness* that makes even Godly Ministers the Dividers of the Church, the reproach of their holy Calling, the Occasion of the increase of triumph of the adversaries, and the causes of no small part of all our unreformedness, distractions and calamity; and the refusers and resisters of the Remedies that are tendered for Healing and Reformation. I dare boldly say, if this one sin were but rooted out of the hearts of the Ministers themselves that are the Preachers of self-denyal, it would make so sudden and wonderful a change in the Church, as would be the glory of our Profession, the Joy of the godly, and the admiration of all! O happy and honourable Magistrates at Court and Countrey, if *self* were but throughly conquered and denyed! O happy and reverend Ministry, the pillars of religion, the honour of the Church, if it were not for the shamefull prevalency of *self*! O happy Churches, happy Cities, Corporations, Societies and Countreys were it not for self! But alas, this it that saddeth our hearts, and makes us look for more and more sad tidings concerning the affairs of the Church, from all parts of the world; or frustrates our hopes, when we look for better. For we know on the one side, that without *self-denyal* there will never be true Reformation or Unity; neither

neither sin nor division will ever be overcome; and on the other side we see that *selfishness* is so natural and common and obstinate, that so many men as are born into the world, so many enemies are there to Holiness and Peace, till grace shal change them; and that all endeavours, perswasions, convictions do little prevail against this deadly rooted sin: so that men will preach against it, and yet most shamefully live in it; and after all rebukes, chastisements and heavy judgements of God, the Church is still bleeding, and Princes, Pastors and People are self-conceited, self-willed and self-seekers still. Alas for the cause and Church of Christ! Must we give it up to the lusts of *self*? Must we sit down and look on its miserable torn condition, with lamentation and despair? and shall we deliver down this despair to our posterity? Were not our hope only in the Omnipotent God, it must be so. When we look at men, at Magistrates or Ministers, we see no hopes: What higher professions can be made by these in succeding ages, then have now been made? And yet what negligence of Magistrates, and what contentiousness of Ministers, destroy all hopes? So that we loook at the restauration of the Church, as at the Resurrection, that must be done by Omnipotency: God must raise up another generation of more self-denying, prudent, zealous Magistrates, and of more Self-studying, Peaceable, Humble, Zealous, Industrious Ministers, before the Healing work will be done. The *selfish* spirit that prevaileth now in the most, is neither fit to be the *Matter* or *Instrument* of the Reformed, Peaceable state which we expect. While the enemies are destroying us by secret fraud and open force, we stand at a distance and unite not against them, yea we are calling each other Hereticks and Deceivers, and teaching them how to revile us, and putting such words into their mouths against us, as may help our people to despise us, and reject us, and warrant them from our own mouths or pens to rail at us and forsake us: One part of us being Hereticks or Deceivers by the testimony of the other part, and the other part by the testimony of too many of them.

Dear Brethren, if *selfishness* shall not now be left, when we

we are in the sight of the havock it hath made, and stand in the field among those that it hath slain, and see the Church of God so horribly abused by it: when then shall it be forsaken! I here intreat every man that loveth his present or everlasting Peace, and the Peace of the Church or Common-wealth, that he will resolve upon a deadly enmity with this *selfishness* in himself and others! And that you will suspect it, and watch against it in every work you have to do. Are you upon any imployment spiritual or secular? Presently enquire when you set upon it, [Is there no *self-interest* and *selfish* disposition lurking here? How far is my own worldly, fleshly ends or prosperity concerned in it?] And if you discover that *self* is any way concerned in it; I beseech you suspect it, and follow *self* with an exceeding watchfull eye; and when you have done your best, it is ten to one but it will over-reach you. O look to it that you be not ensnared before you are aware. Take heed of it, especially you that are great and honourable, and have so much *self interest* to tempt you in the world! How hardly will you escape! When all other enemies are conquered, you have yet *self* the greatest enemy to overcome. Take heed of it; you that have any rising thriving project, little know you on what a precipice you stand: Take heed of it you that are in deep and pinching wants, lest *self* make them seem more grievous then they are, and provoke you to venture upon sin for your relief. Take heed all you that have raging appetites or passions, or lustfull inclinations, and remember your enemy is now discovered, and you have him to deal with before your face: and therefore see that you be resolute and vigilant. Take heed all you that have Learning, Parts, or fame and honour, or any thing that *self* hath to glory in and to abuse, lest the noblest gifts should by this deadly principle be turned into a plague to the Church, and to your souls. Suspect *self* in the choice of your parties and opinions: Suspect it in your publick labours; yea and in your private duties, and greatest diligence in Religious Works; lest when your eyes are opened at last it should appear, that you preached, or prayed, or professed, or wrote, or lived for *self*, and not for God. I do but transcribe the counsel to you, that God is

daily giving in to my own soul: and as I feel exceeding great use of it to my self, so I am sure there is to others: and wo to me and you if we take it not, and be not found among the *self-denying*. Doubtless God will put you to the tryal, and find you frequent use for this grace. Let me take the boldness to tell you from my own (though alas too small) experience, that as it is meer *selfishness* that is the perplexer and disquieter of the mind, without which nothing that befalls us could discompose it; so it is God only that quiets it, and gives it rest: And I bless the Lord I can truly say, that I have found that content in loving and closing with the will of God, and endeavouring to know no interest but his, to disquiet or quiet me, which I never could find in any other way. When God is enough for us, and his will is in our eyes, the will of a Father infinitely good, it may satisfie the soul in the darkest condition; when we understand not the particular meaning of his providence, nor what he is doing with us, yet still we may be sure that he is doing us good: And therefore a child may not only submit to the will of God, because it cannot be resisted, as enemies must be forced to do; but he may Rest in that will as the Center of his desires, and the very felicity and *Heaven* of his soul.

And now Sirs, I must let go this subject, as to you that have heard it preacht, for we must not be alwayes on one thing: but I am exceedingly afraid lest I have lost my labour with most of you, and shall leave you as *selfish* as I found you; because sad experience tells me, that it is so natural and obstinate an enemy that I have discovered, and that you have now to set your selves against. I have done my work; but *self* hath not done, but is still at work in you. I cannot now go home with every one of you, but *self* will go home with you. I cannot be at hand with every one of you, when the next temptation comes, but *self* will be at hand to draw you to entertain it. When you are next tempted to error, to pride, to lust, to contention with your brethren, by words or real enjuries, what will you do then, and how will you stand against this enemy? If God be not your Interest, and the dearest to your souls, and you see not with his light, and *will* not by his *Will*, and

self-

self-denyal be not become as it were your nature; you will never stand after all this that I have said, but *self* will be your undoing for ever! If you have not somewhat within you, as *selfishness* is within you, to be alwayes at hand as it is, and ready, and constant, and powerfull to overcome it, it will be your ruine after all the warnings that have been given you. And this preserving Principle must be the *Spirit of God, by causing you to Deny your selves; Believe in Christ, and Love God above all.* I say again that you may think on it, and live upon it: The sum of all your Religion or saving Grace is in these three, *Faith, Self-denyal*, and *the Love of God. Departing from Carnal-self, Returning home to God by Love, and this by faith in the Redeemer*, is the true Christianity, and the Life that leadeth to everlasting life.

FINIS.

A Dialogue of Self-Denyal.

Fleſh. *Spirit.*

Fleſh.

What! become Nothing! ne're perſwade me to it.
God made me Something: and I'le not undo it.

Spirit.

Thy Something is not thine, but his that gave it.
Reſign it to him, if thou mean to ſave it.

Fleſh.

God gave me Life: and ſhall I chooſe tó die
Before my time? or pine in miſerie?

Spirit.

God *is* thy Life: If then thou feareſt death;
Let him be all thy ſoul, thy pulſe, and breath.

Fleſh.

What! muſt I hate my ſelf? when as my brother
Muſt love me? and I may not hate another?

Spirit.

Loath what is loathſom: Love God in the reſt:
He truly love's himſelf, that love's God beſt.

Fleſh.

Doth God our eaſe and pleaſure to us grudge?
Or doth Religion make a man a drudge?

Spirit.

That is thy Poyſon which thou calleſt Pleaſure:
And that thy drudgery which thou count'ſt thy treaſure.

Fleſh.

Who can endure to be thus mewed up ?
And under Laws for every bit and cup ?

Spirit.

Gods cage is better than the Wilderneſs.
When Winter comes, Liberty brings diſtreſs.

Fleſh.

Pleaſure's mans Happineſs : The Will's not free
To chooſe our miſery : This cannot be.

Spirit.

God is mans End : with him are higheſt joyes :
Senſual pleaſures are but dreams and toyes.
Should ſin ſeem ſweet ! Is Satan turn'd thy friend ?
Will not thy ſweet prove bitter in the end ?
Haſt thou found ſweeter pleaſures than Gods Love ?
Is a fools laughter like the joyes above ?
Beauty ſurpaſſeth all deceitful paints ?
What's empty mirth to the delights of Saints ?
God would not have thee have leſs joy, but more :
And therefore ſhew's thee the eternal ſtore.

Fleſh.

Who can love baſeneſs, poverty and want ?
And under pining ſickneſs be content ?

Spirit.

He that hath laid his treaſure up above
And plac't his portion only in Gods love ;
That waits for Glory when this life is done :
This man will be content with God alone.

Fleſh.

What good will ſorrow do us ? Is not mirth
Fitter to warm a cold heart here on earth ?
Troubles will come whether we will or no :
I'le never baniſh pleaſure, and chooſe wo.

Spirit.

Then chooſe not ſin : touch not forbidden things :
Taſte not the ſweet that endleſs ſorrow brings.
If thou love pleaſure, take in God thy fill :
Look not for laſting joyes in doing ill.

Fleſh.

Fleſh.

Affliction's bitter: life will ſoon be done:
Pleaſure ſhall be my part ere all be gone.

Spirit.

Proſperity is barren: all men ſay
The ſoil is beſt where there's the deepeſt way.
Life is for work, and not to ſpend in play.
Now ſow thy ſeed: labour while it is day.
The Huntſman ſeeks his game in barren plains:
Dirty land anſwers beſt the Plowmans pains.
Paſſengers care not ſo the way be fair;
Husbandmen would have the beſt ground and air.
Firſt think what's ſafe and fruitful: There's no pleaſure
Like the beholding of thy chiefeſt treaſure.

Fleſh.

Nature made me a man, and gave me ſenſe:
Changing of Nature is a vain pretenſe:
It taught me to love women, honour, eaſe,
And every thing that doth my ſenſes pleaſe.

Spirit.

Nature hath made thee Rational; and Reaſon
Muſt rule the ſenſe, in ends, degrees and ſeaſon.
Reaſon's the rider: ſenſe is but the horſe:
Which then is fitteſt to direct thy courſe?
Give up the reins, and thou becom'ſt a beaſt;
Thy fall at death will ſadly end thy feaſt.

Fleſh.

Religion is a dull and heavy thing,
Whereas a merry cup will make me ſing.
Love's entertainments warm both heart and brain:
And wind my fancy to the higheſt ſtrain.

Spirit.

Cupid hath ſtuck a feather in thy cap;
And lull'd thee dead aſleep on *Venu's* lap:
Thy brains are tipled with ſome wantons eyes:
Thy Reaſon is become Luſt's ſacrifice.
Playing a game at Folly, thou haſt loſt
Thy wit, and ſoul, and winneſt to thy coſt.

Thy soul now in a filthy channel lies,
While fancy seems to sore above the skies.
Beauty will soon be stinking loathsom earth:
Sickness and death marr all the wantons mirth.
It is not all the pleasure thou canst find
Will countervail the sting that's left behind.
Blind, brutish souls! that cannot love their God!
And yet can dote on a defiled clod!

Flesh.

Why should I think of what will be to morrow?
An ounce of mirth is worth a pound of sorrow.

Spirit.

But where's that mirth when sorrows overtake thee?
Will it then hold when life and God forsake thee?
Forgetting Death or Hell will not prevent it:
Now lose thy day, thou'lt then too late repent it.

Flesh.

Must I be pain'd and wronged, and not feel?
As if my heart were made of flint or steel?

Spirit.

Dost thou delight to feel thy hurt and smart?
Would not an Antidote preserve thy heart?
Impatience is but self-tormenting folly:
Patience is cordial, easie, sweet and holy.
Is not that better which turns grief to peace,
Than that which doth thy misery encrease?

Flesh.

When sport, and wine, and beauty do invite,
Who is it whom such baits will not incite?

Spirit.

He that perceives the hook and sees the end,
Whither it is that fleshly Pleasures tend.
He that by faith hath seen both Heav'n and Hell,
And what sin costeth at the last can tell:
He that hath try'd and tasted Better things,
And felt that love from which all pleasure springs.
They that still watch, and for Christs coming wait,
Can turn away from, or despise the bait.

Flesh.

Fleſh.

Muſt I be made the foot-ball of diſdain ?
And call'd a preciſe fool or Puritane ?

Spirit.

Remember him that did deſpiſe the ſhame,
And for thy ſake bore undeſerved blame.
Thy journey's of ſmall moment if thou ſtay
Becauſe dogs bark, or ſtones lie in the way.
If life lay on it, wouldſt thou turn again,
For the winds blowing or a little rain?
Is this thy greateſt love to thy dear Lord ?
That canſt not for his ſake bear a foul word?
Wilt thou not bear for him a ſcorners breath,
That underwent for thee a curſed death ?
Is not Heav'n worth the bearing of a flout?
Then blame not Juſtice when it ſhuts thee out.
Will theſe deriders ſtand to what they ſay,
And own their words at the great dreadful day ?
Then they'd be glad, when wrath ſhall overtake them,
To eate their words, and ſay they never ſpake them.

Fleſh.

How ? Forſake all ! Ne're mention it more to me,
I'le be of no Religion to undo me.

Spirit.

Is it not thine more in thy Fathers hand,
Then when it is laid out at ſins command?
And is that ſav'd that's ſpent upon thy luſt?
Or which muſt be a prey to thieves or ruſt?
And wouldſt thou have thy riches in thy way,
Where thou art paſſing on and canſt not ſtay?
And is that loſt that's ſent to Heav'n before ?
Hadſt thou not rather have thy friends and ſtore,
Where thou maiſt dwell for ever, in the light
Of that long glorious day that fears no night ?

Fleſh.

But who can willingly ſubmit to Death,
Which will bereave us of our life and breath ;

That

That laies our flesh to rot in loathsom graves,
Where brains and eyes were, leaves but ugly caves ?

Spirit.

So nature breaks and casts away the shell,
Where the now-beauteous singing bird did dwell:
The secundine that once the infant cloath'd,
After the birth, is cast away and loath'd.
Thus Roses drop their sweet leaves under-foot;
But the Spring shew's that life was in the root.
Souls are the Roots of Bodies: Christ the Head
Is Root of both, and will revive the dead.
Our Sun still shineth when with us its night:
When he return's, we shall shine in his light.
Souls that behold and praise God with the Just,
Mourn not because their bodies are but dust.
Graves are but beds where flesh till morning sleep's:
Or Chests where God a while our garments keep's.
Our folly thinks he spoils them in the keeping;
Which causeth our excessive fears and weeping:
But God that doth our rising day foresee:
Pittie's not rotting flesh so much as we.
The birth of Nature was deform'd by sin:
The birth of Grace did our repair begin:
The birth of Glory at the Resurrection
Finisheth all, and brings both to perfection.
Why should not fruit when it is mellow fall?
Why would we linger here when God doth call?

Flesh.

The things and persons in this world I see;
But after death I know not what will be.

Spirit.

Know'st thou not that which God himself hath spoken?
Thou hast his promise which was never broken.
Reason proclaims that noble heav'n-born souls,
Are made for higher things than worms and moles.
God hath not made such faculties in vain,
Nor made his service a deluding pain.

But

But Faith resolves all doubts, and hears the Lord
Telling us plainly by his holy Word,
That uncloath'd souls shall with their Saviour dwell,
Triumphing over sin, and death, and hell.
And by the power of Almighty Love
Stars shall arise from graves to shine above.
There we shall see the Glorious face of God:
His blessed presence shall be our abode:
The face that banisheth all doubts and fears;
Shuts out all sins, and dryeth up all tears.
That face which darkeneth the Suns bright rayes,
Shall shine us into everlasting joyes.
Where Saints and Angels shall make up one Chore,
To praise the Great *Jehovah* evermore.

Flesh.

Reason not with me against sight and sense:
I doubt all this is but a vain pretence.
Words against nature are not worth a rush:
One bird in hand is worth two in the bush.
If God will give me Heav'n at last, I'le take it:
But for my Pleasure here I'le not forsake it.

Spirit.

And wilt thou keep it? brutish flesh how long?
Wilt thou not shortly sing another song?
When Conscience is awakened, keep thy mirth!
When Sickness and Death comes, hold fast this earth:
Live if thou canst when God saith, Come away:
Try whether all thy friends can cause thy stay.
Wilt thou tell death and God, thou wilt not die?
And wilt thou the consuming fire defie?
Art thou not sure to let go what thou hast?
And doth not Reason bid thee then forecast,
And value the least hope of endless joyes,
Before known vanities and dying toyes?
And can the Lord that is most just and wise,
Found all mans duty in deceit and lies?

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